

ORLANDO

# Attractions

A G A Z I N E

AttractionsMagazine.com  
Spring 2012  
Volume 5, Issue 2

## Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom

Everything you need  
to know to defeat  
the Disney Villains

**Jaws: Gone But  
Not Forgotten**

**Take a Trip in  
Time at Titanic:  
The Experience**

**Q&A with a  
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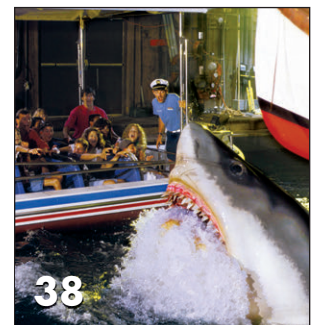
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# What's new on...

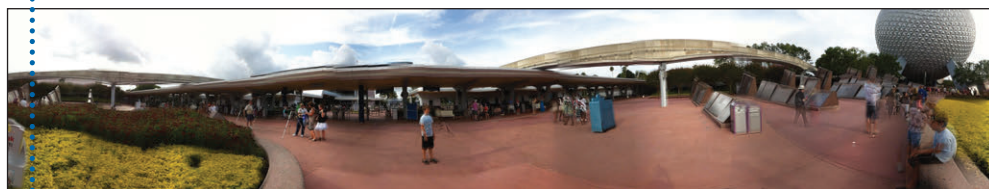
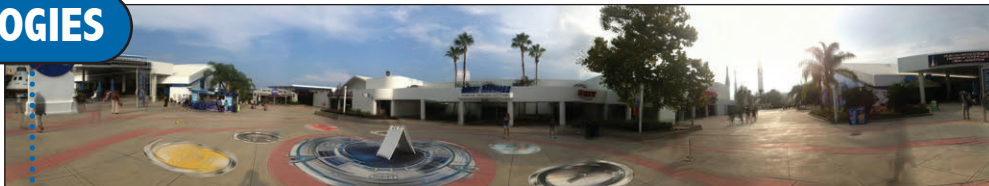
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## THESE STORIES AND MORE...

In addition to the stories and photos in this magazine, check our website regularly for even more, plus many videos. Stay up-to-date with all the latest theme park and attraction news through our weekly video show, download our free iPhone/iPad app and sign up for our free email newsletter.

### SHARING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

One of the comments we hear most often is that you love our magazine, website, videos and show because they bring you away from your daily lives and into the theme parks. With that in mind, we're always looking at the latest technologies that will help us immerse you even more. Check our website for the results of our latest tech toys. We have added 360 degree photos, 360 degree videos and 3D videos from many of the Orlando area attractions.



### THE OBAMAS JOKE AND DANCE

Visit our website to see video of President Obama's visit to the Magic Kingdom where he gave a speech about tourism. It's not as boring as it sounds. He also makes a couple of good jokes about his visit. For a little more action, watch the video of First Lady Michelle Obama at ESPN Wide World of Sports doing the Platypus Walk with Agent P and some Disney Channel stars.

### LAST RIDE ON JAWS

Elsewhere in this issue you can read all about the former Jaws ride at Universal Studios. But for a better feel for what the Amity area and ride was like, visit our website. We have many photos and videos from within the former area during the day and night. You can even ride along on the very last Jaws tour. It was an emotional ride.



### LETTING TIME LAPSE

Our online contributor Anthony Armenia has started a new series of time-lapse videos on our YouTube Channel. While he plans on adding a time-lapse video for each of the theme parks, right now you can view a time-lapse video tribute to the Jaws ride and one from Magic Kingdom. Look for Busch Gardens next.



### LIVE FROM THE PARKS

Follow us on Twitter at [twitter.com/attractions](https://twitter.com/attractions) and our Facebook page at [facebook.com/attractionsmagazine](https://facebook.com/attractionsmagazine). We frequently post on-the-spot information, photos and short videos while we're inside Orlando's theme parks. You can also be notified of our latest videos if you subscribe to our YouTube channel at [youtube.com/attractionsmagazine](https://youtube.com/attractionsmagazine).





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Hours of video from:



- Grand openings
- Special events
- Interviews
- Full ride-throughs
- Walt Disney World
- Universal Orlando
- SeaWorld
- Busch Gardens



### THEME PARK WEIGHT LOSS

I absolutely love you guys! I live in NYC but I have property in Orlando and spend most of my holidays and summers down there.

Ali and Banks, way to go you guys! [Editor's Note: Our show hosts Ali Flores and Banks Lee have started a weight loss challenge.] I also lost weight to get on Harry Potter and the Forbidden Journey (I am such a ride chicken – will not go on that again willingly), but I gained it all back. I'm seriously thinking about joining you guys. I am an avid walker and I think you two should do a segment about some of the walking areas outside of the parks, like the one around Epcot and the walk between the Grand Floridian, the

Polynesian, and the Ticket and Transportation Center.

Those are great walks and you get to see how beautiful the hotels are.



I'm adding this really cool picture I took with my iPad when I was down this Christmas. We were eating at our favorite

place (the fountain by the Flame Tree Barbecue) and my mom spotted this perfect photo. I hope you enjoy.

Kellie Fay  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

**Great photo Kellie. Thanks for sharing. I hope you do take those extra pounds off again. That's why Banks and Ali started their challenge, so you can all support each other.**

### SIX FLAGS OVER FLORIDA?

I was hearing rumors about a Six Flags Coming to Florida and I was trying to get clarification if it's true. I would love if there's a Six Flags in Florida because I love Six Flags and I'm moving to Florida.

Sam Babajide  
Houston, Texas

**Sorry to disappoint you Sam, but those rumors have been circling for many years. But you'll love being in Florida anyway. We have more theme parks than any other state and you never know when the Six Flags rumor may come true.**

### MAJOR CRUSH

Hey guys! I've been with the show since the start and I absolutely love it. I've only been to Orlando twice in my life but it's always been the happiest times when I'm there, so this show offers me an escape to those happy times every week! I just wanted to say how much I adore Ali and Heather together! Nothing else brightens up my day more than watching those two. And, if I might add, I have a major crush on Heather. Thanks for all you do!

Nic Perry  
Crown Point, Ind.

**Thanks for watching Nic. Yes, Heather is easy on the eyes. We hope you make it back to Orlando soon.**

### ACTING DOPEY

I'm sending this cause, well, I think it's funny! These are my sons Dustin and Ryan leaving the Art of Animation building at Disney's Hollywood Studios.

Jill Hebert  
Saint Martinville, La.

**B**efore Hogwarts Castle rose at The Wizarding World of Harry Potter. The land beneath it was a backstage area of Universal's Islands of Adventure. As the land was bulldozed, guests could get a look at the construction by riding The Flying Unicorn roller coaster. Now the coaster remains as Flight of the Hippogriff and offers a great view of Hogwarts Castle.

### THEN ...



### ... AND NOW







**Thanks for sharing one of your family's silly moments.**

#### WHEN TO VISIT?

I just wanted to say that I love what you guys are doing. You make me feel like I'm still there in Orlando when I'm not able to be. I was wondering if you might be able to give me some advice on when to plan my next vacation to Disney. We usually go the last week of September, but this year we want to go around March or April. We want to avoid the spring break crowds. I would like to go when it is least crowded during that time of year. Thank you in advance for your help.

Edward Smolinski  
Egg Harbor Township, N.J.

**The best times to visit are anytime most kids in the country are in school. So March and April can be tricky with different schools taking their spring breaks at different times. I'd say either try to come in early March or late April.**

#### LOVE THE BLOOPERS

I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoy your podcast each week. When you live as far away as England, watching your weekly shows makes us feel so much more connected with everything that's going on in the Orlando area. Not only do they get me totally hyped for my upcoming trip from the UK, but the bloopers have me hysterically laughing

Linda Walker  
Taplow, England

**Whether you watch our show on YouTube, as a podcast on iTunes, or on Florida's Bright House Cable Networks, we're happy to bring some enjoyment into your home.**



#### GORGE-FEST AT BOMA

Thanks for the great article on Boma in the latest issue. It's been the top choice of any Orlando area restaurant for my family for over 10 years and no trip to WDW is complete without at least one gorge-fest at Boma. We love all the offerings, from the Bobotie to FuFu, but the Zebra Domes are our absolute favorite! In fact, after a recent day spent at Hollywood Studios, Zach and Zoe struck a pose in front of the dessert station. You can see the Domes to the right of Zoe. Your magazine and show are the best alternatives to being in Orlando.

Barry Rose  
Maple Glen, Penn.

**OMG Barry, you're making us hungry! Boma is so good, it even makes Darth Maul feel like hugging a rainbow princess. (Or even more unbelievable, a brother hugging a sister.)**

#### CRUISIN' WITH GOOFY

My partner and I love Disney World, even though we don't have children. However, we were a bit apprehensive taking a Disney Cruise as two adults. Our fears proved unfounded as we had the time of our lives aboard the Disney Dream this January. Disney did an excellent job of matching us with two fantastic

## From the Editor

Many of the letters we've recently received are from fans of our television show, appropriately named "Orlando Attractions Magazine - The Show". I hope those fans will see their letters here, as I hope all of you also watch our show and visit our website as well as read the magazine. Although there is some crossover, our show, magazine and website as well as our Facebook and Twitter accounts each feature unique content. You may see a news story posted on our website but not mentioned in the magazine or on our show. You may see a segment on our show that is exclusive to the show. And of course, all of the stories in this magazine are exclusive to the magazine.

We always try to get you the latest news as quick as we can, and present our stories in the medium best suited for them.

Have Fun,  
Matt Roseboom  
Publisher/Editor



couples for dinner. We loved the adults-only portion of Castaway Cay, but also enjoyed watching kids have fun with their own activities. We even had the surprise chance to get a bit "goofy" on deck!

Michael Fridgen  
Rochester, Minn.

**Yes, Disney cruises and Disney World can be just as much fun for adults as kids. As your picture shows, we all have a little bit of kid still inside us. By the way, be sure to check our website and show for our coverage of the launch of the new Disney Fantasy cruise ship.**

#### THE SHOW BROUGHT ME BACK

Just wanted to let you know that after a year or so away, I am re-subscribing to *Orlando Attractions Magazine*. And I want-



ed you to know that my decision to subscribe again is based primarily on the strength of your incredible video podcast, "The Show!"

"The Show" is just a phenomenal piece of work that you guys put together week after week; I really don't know how you do it. Like the magazine, I had been away from "The Show" for some time after catching the first few episodes, and

I can't believe how far it has come since then. The content is fun and informative, and the hosts are amazing. In particular I have to mention Heather Leonardi. Her ability to interact with the camera and her sense of comedic timing are something I would expect from the host of a nationally-syndicated TV show. Every time she mouths a silent apology to the viewer for the other host's bad jokes, it just kills me!

Add to that the fact that she's a theme park nut and she's gorgeous, and, well, what else can I say?

Todd Slater  
Caldwell, N.J.

**We're glad to have you back Todd. We've passed your great comments on to Heather. All of the hosts really appreciate positive feedback.**

### We asked our Facebook followers, "What's your favorite theme park restaurant?"

**John Patterson** Crystal Palace. Pooh characters and eat all want, Yum!!

**Andrew Holden** The Hollywood Brown Derby because of the atmosphere and the Cobb salad!!!

**Phil Morrison** Got to be Cosmic Ray's - Just for the toppings bar.

**Mark Shakespeare** Universal Islands of Adventure Circus McGurcus Cafe Stoo-pondous. Because its excellently themed from Dr. Seuss' imagination and the chicken ceasar salads are the best!!!

**Stuart Steel** Cosmic Rays for his jokes.

**Pamela Guinn Williams** Via Napoli in Epcot. Love the food, the atmosphere, the cast members. Then when you walk out, you are in Italy, which is a beautiful area in World Showcase.

**Dana Elyse** Yak and Yeti in Animal Kingdom. Their salmon was the best I've ever had, their desserts are amazing and I just love the atmosphere!

**Edward Guerra** The Comic Strip Café at Islands of Adventure is my favorite because it has such a wide variety of food. Everything from Chinese to Italian is available and the best part about it is that it's a part of Universal's Meal Deal!

**Gérôme Henrley** Le Cellier Steakhouse at Epcot. Even if the price is a little bit excessive, the food is delicious and the duck trio is so good!

**Robert Ashburn** Crown Colony House. They have the best view of

the Serengeti as well as great food found nowhere else in Busch Gardens. And that bread is amazing!

**Barry Rose** Though Confisco in Islands of Adventure holds a special place in my heart, no trip to Orlando is complete without a stop at the Sci-Fi Dine-In Theater at Disney's Hollywood Studios. A combination of amazing atmosphere and scenery, super friendly service, and tasty fun food (best milkshakes and reuben sandwiches ever!) put this restaurant on the top of my family's list.

**Oniel Gonzalez** Three Broomsticks at Islands of Adventure! Chicken, ribs and potatoes are delicious! And I can have Butterbeer.

**Corrina Renee** The Biergarten at Epcot. Fantastic buffet full of incredible German food and really great entertainment. Every time we have the extra cash we go there. And the restaurant in The Land at Epcot is also fabulous. I've never had food that's tasted so fresh and the best part is that all the veggies you eat there come from The Land garden. I love being able to see all the food I'm eating being grown.

**Rob Davey** Nine Dragons just for the Generals Tsos chicken, lovely.

**Mike Whelan** Pizza Planet - good pizza!

**James Galliford** I'd have to go with Confiscos at Islands of Adventure.

They never did me wrong. A pitcher of sangria is always great to get the afternoon going and they have

great food in there and a great staff.

**Anthony Bonacolta** Three Broomsticks because the food is great and I like Harry Potter.

**James Malin** Cosmic Ray's Starlight Cafe. Three different fast food counters to pick a meal from. A toppings bar for your burgers and finally the great Sunny Eclipse putting on a show.

**Jim Lockwood** Rose and Crown in Epcot as a remembrance of my year in London. The voices are music to my ears - and then at night there's that wonderful Hat Lady (love ya, Carol).

**Rory Melly** The Three Broomsticks for their fantastic fish and chips. A nice change from burgers and pizzas, too. Plus Rainforest Cafe for their delicious Volcano Cake.

**Montana Martzall** I really love the wings at Flame Tree BBQ in Animal Kingdom.

**Sarah O'Sullivan** Marrakesh in Epcot because my 7-year-old son said he had hearts in his eyes for the belly dancer.

**Anthony Armenia** The Crown Colony Restaurant at Busch Gardens because it has the view of the veldt, unique food and great service you just can't find anywhere else!

**Michelle Turoczi** The Brown Derby at Hollywood Studios! You can't beat the feeling of Hollywood glamour!

**McKenzie Ramey** The Three Broomsticks because it still has some of the same entrees from

when it used to be The Enchanted Oak Tavern. Love the Chicken and Ribs Platter!

**Richard Haynes** Le Cellier Steakhouse. Food is great and atmosphere is awesome!

**Becky Hoh** The Three Broomsticks at Islands of Adventure!!!! The theming is great and the staff is courteous. The Butterbeer is delicious! The building itself is very picturesque with all sorts of different angles on the outside and just a friendly vibe inside.

**Amber Farah Berry** I love to eat at Cinderella's Royal Table. Its just so magical to eat inside the castle.

**Bradley Mehrlrose** I love the Plaza restaurant on Main Street at the Magic Kingdom, The food is so good and the milkshakes they make taste amazing! I eat there every time!

**Deborah King Evans** Sharks Underwater Grill (at SeaWorld) because my niece has lots of really bad allergies and they scrubbed the grill down and created a wonderful meal specially for her. The smile on her face that day I will never forget. I ate there on my own once too. The staff kept coming over to talk to me and made sure I wasn't alone. The service is always fantastic and the food's awesome. I also love Mythos at the Islands of Adventure. The food is wonderful and the setting is fantastic.



## WRITE TO US!

"Like" Orlando Attractions Magazine on Facebook to keep up with all the latest news, comment and answer next issue's Facebook question.

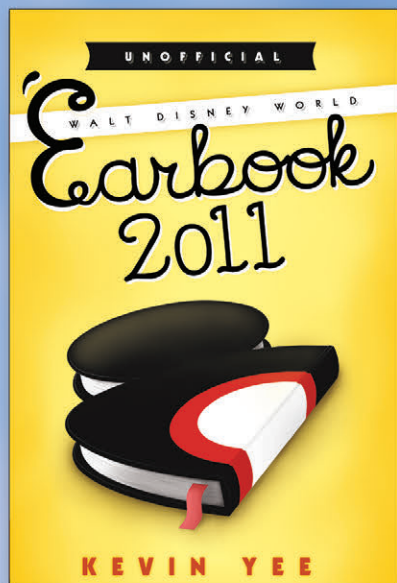
**We want your letters and photos!** If you have any **comments** about the magazine, **questions** about traveling to Orlando or fun stories or photos to share, simply head to [attractionsmagazine.com](http://attractionsmagazine.com) and fill out the contact form or email us directly at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com).



# INDEPENDENT DISNEY BOOKS

BY AUTHOR KEVIN YEE

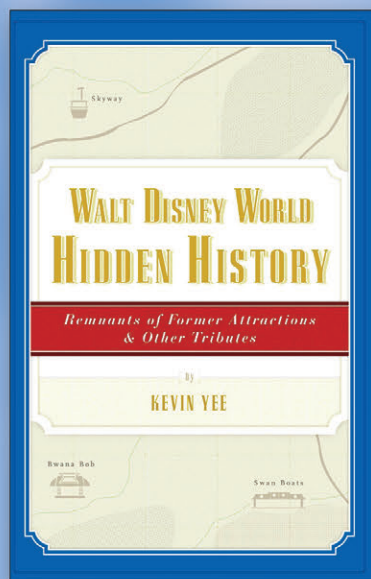
Enjoy trivia, insider tributes, and historical facts about Walt Disney World? Kevin Yee has spent twenty years working in, researching, and publishing about Disney theme parks.



**NEW for 2012!**

"Unofficial Walt Disney World Earbook 2011" is nothing less than a yearbook of all the changes at WDW in the past year. From the closure of Mickey's Toontown Fair to the addition of new elements at the Haunted Mansion and the relaunching of Star Tours, 2011 held lots of changes at Walt Disney World. Other new attractions included: "The Magic, the Memories, and You!" castle projections, Town Square Theater and Magician Mickey, Tinker Bell's Magical Nook, Monorail Peach, House of Innoventions, and the

"Walt Disney World Hidden History" explores the many hidden tributes and references to bygone attractions that populate the theme parks. The individual items discussed are all things you can actually point to at the parks, so the book provides a kind of walking tour of the parks that yields a glimpse of the deeper history percolating below the surface.



Kevin Yee is also the author of three books about Disneyland, the most recent being *Mouse Trap*, an intimate recounting of what a decade as a front-line worker at Disneyland looks like.

\*All books are available from Amazon.com





## STAR WARS WEEKENDS

**Location:** Disney's Hollywood Studios

**Dates:** May 18 to 20, May 25 to 27, June 1 to 3, June 8 to 10

**Cost:** Included with park admission

A celebration of the Star Wars franchise. Each day the event will include Star Wars celebrities, a parade, memorabilia, character meet and greets and trivia challenges. Don't miss the fun and funny Hyperspace Hoopla.



## 19TH ANNUAL EPCOT INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN FESTIVAL

**Location:** Epcot

**Dates:** March 7 through May 20

**Cost:** Included with park admission

See some of your favorite Disney characters from Mickey to Bambi as stunning topiaries, along with more than 100 other topiaries at this year's event. When you're not gazing at the millions of flowers, jam out to your favorite '60s and '70s music during the Flower Power concert series at the American Gardens Theater. Also, you'll be able to get a few tips and pointers on growing your own garden from HGTV stars and Epcot gardening experts.

### The 2012 Flower Power Lineup:

- March 9 to 11: Jose Feliciano
- March 16 to 18: Starship starring Mickey Thomas
- March 23 to 25: The Guess Who
- March 30 to April 1: The Spinners
- April 6 to 8: Chubby Checker and The Wildcats
- April 13 to 15: Paul Revere and The Raiders
- April 20 to 22: The Turtles featuring Flo and Eddie
- April 27 to 29: Chuck Negron, formerly of Three Dog Night
- May 4 to 6: The Orchestra starring former members of ELO
- May 11 to 13: Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone
- May 18 to 20: Davy Jones





**We've chosen our favorite upcoming events to spotlight. You don't want to miss them on your next trip to Orlando.**

All events and dates are subject to change. Please check with the proper organization before attending.

Check [AttractionsMagazine.com](http://AttractionsMagazine.com) for up-to-date happenings in the Orlando area.

## MARDI GRAS

**Location:** Universal Studios

**Dates:** Select dates through April 14

**Cost:** Included with park admission

Celebrate Mardi Gras with colorful beads, a parade with hand-crafted floats, street performers, Cajun food and live concerts from the biggest names in the music industry.

- March 10: Big Time Rush
- March 16: J. Cole
- March 17: Sugar Ray
- March 23: Hot Chelle Rae
- March 24: B.o.B
- March 30: Plain White T's
- March 31: Prince Royce
- April 7: Cyndi Lauper
- April 14: KC & The Sunshine Band



## VIVA LA MUSIC

**Location:** SeaWorld and Busch Gardens

**Dates:** Weekends April 14 to May 6

**Cost:** Included with park admission

Jam out to live Latin music from some of the most popular Latino artists and chow down on authentic Latin cuisines.

### SeaWorld:

- April 14: Elvis Crespo
- April 21: Grupo Niche
- April 28: RKM & Ken-Y
- May 5: Gilberto Santa Rosa

### Busch Gardens:

- April 15: Victor Manuelle
- April 22: Grupo Mania
- April 29: Dyland & Lenny
- May 6: To Be Announced



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### Universal Orlando

[www.universalorlando.com](http://www.universalorlando.com)  
(407) 363-8000

### SeaWorld Orlando

[www.seaworld.com/orlando](http://www.seaworld.com/orlando)  
(800) 327-2424

### Busch Gardens

[www.buschgardens.com/BGT](http://www.buschgardens.com/BGT)  
(888) 800-5447



## STATUS CHANGING

### Don't Be Late for your Fastpass

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD

Disney World has begun strictly enforcing Fastpass return times. Unlike in the past, guests may not return to the attraction any time before or later than what is printed on their Fastpass ticket. Disney stated that enforcing this policy will allow them "to provide the best experience possible."



## STATUS: NOW OPEN

### Take an Exotic Car for a Spin

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD SPEEDWAY

Now you can drive an exotic or luxury supercar and live your dream. Get behind the wheel of a Ferrari, Lamborghini or many other cars that may be worth more than your house. It's an Exotic Driving Experience.



## STATUS: OPEN, THEN CLOSED

### Habit Heroes Interactive Exhibit

LOCATION: INNOVENTIONS AT EPCOT

Habit Heroes is a physical interactive exhibit with three main games: dashing about, shooting a cannon and aerobics. This new experience encourages children of all ages to learn healthy lifestyle habits and become more active. The attraction was closed at press time as Disney said they were adjusting it after the initial testing period.



## STATUS: REMODELED

### Japan Grill Offering New Tastes

LOCATION: EPCOT

The Katsura Grill recently opened at the Japan Pavilion after a refurbishment that began last August. The new menu features options such as sushi, udon, teriyaki and other Japanese small bites. It is a quick-service restaurant that replaced the Yakitori House.



PHOTO BY DON GWOREK



## STATUS: CLOSED

### It's Over for Amity Boat Tours

LOCATION: UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

The Amity area and its attractions at Universal Orlando closed Jan. 2 to make room for "an exciting, new attraction experience." Amity was home of Captain Jake's Amity Boat Tours, also known as Jaws. Although the area is being demolished, Universal still hasn't announced what will be taking its place, but rumors suggest it'll be for a Wizarding World of Harry Potter expansion.



## STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

### A Cold New Beginning

LOCATION: SEAWORLD ORLANDO

Out with the old and in with the new, the old Penguin Encounter exhibit is now demolished to make way for Antarctica: Empire of the Penguin. Empire of the Penguin will be a whole new realm complete with a new ride that will immerse guests into a penguin's natural habitat. The new attraction is set to open next spring.



## STATUS: NOW OPEN

### Haunted Alien Mini-Golf Fun

LOCATION: UNIVERSAL CITYWALK

A unique 36-hole miniature golf experience inspired by the classic drive-in movie era is now open at Universal's Citywalk. There are two courses, with one being sci-fi entitled "Invaders from Planet Putt" and the other based on the horror genre entitled "The Haunting of Ghostly Green".



## STATUS: OPENING MAY 26

### New Water Park

LOCATION: LEGOLAND FLORIDA

Legoland will be adding a water park to its Florida park, but it will only be accessible for Legoland theme park guests, at an additional fee. The new additions will include a wave pool, a 375-foot-long slide, a 60-foot-high slide for the thrill seekers, an interactive water playground, a lazy river with inner tubes you can build Legos on, and more.





## STATUS: ANNOUNCED

### More Harry Potter to Come

LOCATION:  
UNIVERSAL  
ORLANDO  
RESORT

At a special press event in Los Angeles, it was announced that not only will Universal Hollywood be receiving a Wizarding World of Harry Potter area, but Universal Orlando will receive a "significant expansion" to its Wizarding World section. No details have been announced yet, but rumors point to a Gringott's Bank ride and a Hogwarts Express train ride.



## STATUS: NEW

### An Addition High Above Orlando

LOCATION:  
WALT  
DISNEY  
WORLD  
AREA

Orlando Balloon Rides added the largest hot air balloon in the U.S. to its fleet. The new balloon holds 24 passengers and is 11 stories tall when fully inflated. The balloon ride brings you over swamps, forests and ponds. The entire experience lasts about three hours, with a complimentary champagne toast and breakfast.



## STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

### Luxury Resort Coming to Golden Oak

LOCATION: DISNEY'S GOLDEN OAK

Construction has started on a Four Seasons luxury resort on Disney's Golden Oak property. The resort will have 444-rooms, a 14,000-square-foot spa, fitness center, three pools, a lazy river, a roof-top restaurant with view of Magic Kingdom and much more. The resort will also remodel and manage the Osprey Ridge golf course. The Four Seasons resort has a 2014 targeted opening date.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WALT DISNEY WORLD



## STATUS: OPENING APRIL 27

### The Turtles Are Coming – in 3D

LOCATION:  
SEAWORLD  
ORLANDO

Experience a turtle's epic journey in a one-of-a-kind experience. TurtleTrek will be the first 3D film in a 360-degree dome theater. Along with the film, the attraction will feature large aquariums with fresh and saltwater fish, sea turtles, and manatees.



## STATUS: BEING REFURBISHED

### Same Ride, Same Name, New Experience

LOCATION: EPCOT

Test Track will close this April and will open in the fall with a new theme, "Chevrolet Design Center." The new experience will be more interactive, have a remodeled queue with music, media, dramatic lighting and Chevy concept vehicles. Guests will design the "SimCar" they ride in.



## STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

### SpongeBob Shopping

LOCATION:  
UNIVERSAL  
STUDIOS

A new immersive retail entertainment experience will become home to SpongeBob SquarePants and other characters from the number one kids' animated TV series, Nickelodeon's SpongeBob SquarePants. Look for it to open near the ET ride later this year.



## STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

### Grand Floridian is Getting Grander

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD

Disney's Grand Floridian Resort and Spa is expanding with new Disney Vacation Club (DVC) villas. The building will be located next to the spa and wedding pavilion and will be the 12th DVC property. The new villas will open in late 2013.





## STATUS: BEING REFURBISHED

### Say Goodbye to Little Red

LOCATION: ANIMAL KINGDOM

Disney's Kilimanjaro Safari ride will be receiving more animals, specifically zebras, but in order to do so they must make room. The poacher scene near the end of the ride will be leaving for the new additions. The area will be reconstructed into savannah space with watering holes. The changes will be completed this Fall but the ride will remain open while the changes are made.



## STATUS: COMING SOON

### 100 Years of Movie Magic

LOCATION: UNIVERSAL STUDIOS

With Universal celebrating their 100th anniversary, they've decided to add some new things to their theme parks. Starting this spring, Universal will host a daytime parade and a nighttime water spectacular. Universal's Superstar Parade will feature music, performers and floats alongside characters from Despicable Me, Hop, SpongeBob SquarePants and more. Universal's nighttime show, Universal's Cinematic Spectacular, will feature clips from Universal movies projected onto water screens, colorful fountains and a narration by actor Morgan Freeman. Universal will open the Despicable Me Minion Madness 3D simulator ride this Summer.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

## STATUS: NOW OPEN

### Animal Care Center Now Treating Patients

LOCATION: BUSCH GARDENS

Guests can now observe how Busch Gardens cares for their animals in this new state-of-the-art Animal Care Center. The old center was located out of guest view, but now everyone can learn and watch how Busch Gardens prepares their food, does exams and performs surgeries on their animals.



## STATUS: UPDATED

### The New Man Group

LOCATION: UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

The same Blue Man Group we've learned to love over the years has a retooled show. The new show is about the Blue Man Group and audience discovering and exploring the world's obsession with technology. Everything they're notorious for has been updated too, from their new environment, interactivity, music and laughs.



PHOTO BY SIDNEY PARENTEAU



## STATUS: COMING SOON

### Fantasyland Becoming Reality

LOCATION: MAGIC  
KINGDOM

Although it will be more than a year until the Fantasyland expansion will be fully completed, part of it will be opening in March. The first attractions to open will be the Fantasyland train station, the Great Goofini Barnstormer roller coaster, and the first half of the Dumbo the Flying Elephant attraction. Pictured here is part of Prince Eric's Castle, which is part of The Little Mermaid ride that should open this fall.



## STATUS: RE-OPENING IN MARCH

### Was That Really Spider-Man?

LOCATION:  
UNIVERSAL'S  
ISLANDS OF  
ADVENTURE

The Amazing Adventures of Spiderman has gotten a high-tech refurbishment. All the video scenes on the ride have been re-animated in high-definition, with lifelike and extremely detailed scenes. The newly refurbished ride will feature new 3D glasses, upgrades to the set and audio and lighting systems. Keep an eye out for all the new details, including a cameo by Spider-Man co-creator Stan Lee.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

## STATUS: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

### Rainforest Cafe Gets Explosive

LOCATION: DOWNTOWN DISNEY

The Rainforest Cafe will be receiving two new additions to its highly-themed restaurant. The first will be an outdoor bar called Lava Lounge. The second addition will be an erupting volcano on top of the restaurant. The new additions are expected to be complete this fall. The restaurant will remain open while the changes are made.



## STATUS: Coming Soon

### More Themed Accommodations

LOCATION: WALT DISNEY WORLD

Disney's Port Orleans has added 512 Royal Guest rooms. The rooms have hidden treasures from Disney films and swirling "fireworks" on the headboard of the bed. Next to Disney's Pop Century Resort, Disney's Art of Animation Resort featuring themed courtyards and 1,984 rooms modeled after "The Lion King," "Cars," "Finding Nemo" and "The Little Mermaid" will start opening in sections this May with "Finding Nemo" courtyard and rooms.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DISNEY



# Photo Finds

Orlando is always filled with fun things to see and our photographers are there to capture it all.

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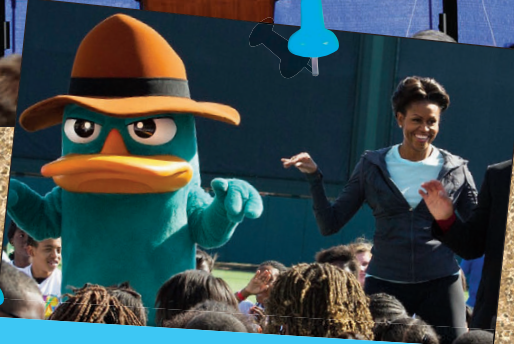
This year's **Bands Brew** and BBQ event at **SeaWorld** was expanded to both Saturday and Sunday. The February event included great food, great beer and great live music from top artists. The event was also held at **Busch Gardens** on Sundays.



**SeaWorld** held their first ever "**Just for Kids**" festival this past January. The event, held on Saturdays, featured concerts by LazyTown, Max & Ruby, the Doodlebops and Choo-Choo Soul.



PHOTOS COURTESY WALT DISNEY WORLD



Both **President Barack Obama** and **First Lady Michelle Obama** visited Walt Disney World this year, but in separate visits. The president gave a speech on tourism to invited guests on **Main Street USA** at the Magic Kingdom, then the first lady visited **ESPN Wide World of Sports** and danced with **Agent P** from Phineas and Ferb. Michelle Obama was in town to speak about the importance of healthy living.



**Monster Jam**, the monster truck show, filled the **Citrus Bowl** in Downtown Orlando this past January. Fans came to see all their favorite trucks and drivers including Dennis Anderson's **Grave Digger**.



The **International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA)** held their yearly expo at the **Orange County Convention Center** this past November. It's not open to the general public, but this is where everyone in the attractions business goes to see what's new (such as this retractable, sitting zip-line) and buy products for their business.



The 2012 **Super Bowl MVP Eli Manning** from the New York Giants visited the Magic Kingdom just one day after winning the Super Bowl and telling the world he was **"going to Disney World!"** He paraded down Main Street USA in a convertible with **Mickey Mouse** and many other Disney characters walking along.



The **Festival of the Masters** was held at **Downtown Disney** this past November. The annual event features many award-winning artists, amazing sidewalk chalk drawings and some interactive activities such as this **Lego mural** created with the help of guests.



**MegaCon**, the sci-fi and comic book convention was held in mid-february at the **Orange County Convention Center**. Bigger than ever, thousands of fans, many of them in costume, came to see celebrities, check out merchandise, attend panels and just have a great time.



# VERSUS

## WE PUT ATTRACTIONS HEAD-TO-HEAD

By Nick Lepa

### SORCERERS OF THE MAGIC KINGDOM VS. KIM POSSIBLE WORLD SHOWCASE ADVENTURE

A new interactive game has started at Magic Kingdom. How does it compare to the original at Epcot?

#### STORY



**SORCERERS OF MAGIC (TIE):** There are nine different missions, but they're about you helping defeat Disney villains and their evil plans.



**KIM POSSIBLE (TIE):** You'll help secret teenage spy, Kim, and her best friend Ron take down an evil-mastermind's plans for world domination.

#### INTERACTIVITY

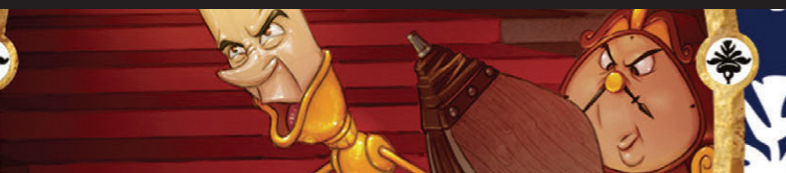


**SORCERERS OF MAGIC:** It's awesome to interact with a "portal". But it's mostly just a screen and you holding a card up to it.



**KIM POSSIBLE (WINNER):** Not only will you be able to make sets around Epcot move, but you also get to mess around with physical objects, like golf balls.

#### RELEVANCE



**SORCERERS OF MAGIC (WINNER):** There are many different characters from Disney's film archives. You'll likely interact with your favorite.

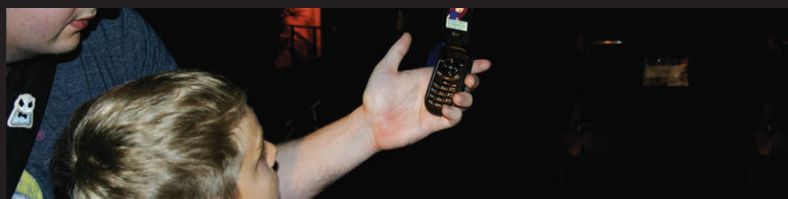


**KIM POSSIBLE:** The game is themed around the canceled Kim Possible television show. Unless you watched the show, you won't know who the characters are. But we've heard rumors of a possible Phineas & Ferb makeover.

#### REPLAYABILITY



**SORCERERS OF MAGIC (WINNER):** With 70 different spell cards, each guest will have a different experience.



**KIM POSSIBLE:** No matter how many times you play the different missions, the games will always be the same.

#### TOOLS



**SORCERERS OF MAGIC (WINNER):** Not only do your key cards stay active for up to a week, but you can also take them home as a free souvenir and trade them with other guests.

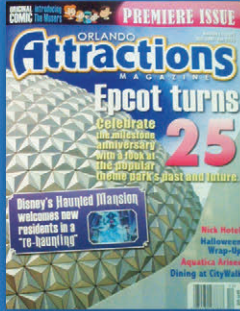


**KIM POSSIBLE:** It's cool to be able to hold and interact with a "Kimmunicator" cell phone, but you have to return it at the end of the day and it's not even a smartphone.



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# Of Mouse and Man

## Recently retired Walt Disney World publicist, Dave Herbst

**D**ave Herbst is a native of Baltimore, Md., and grew up in West Mifflin, Pa., near Pittsburgh. He began writing professionally at the age of 15 – at the rate of five cents per column inch in *The Homestead* (Pa.) *Daily Messenger*. He quickly learned how to tell stories in the longest ways possible.

Dave attended Ohio University (Bobcats), in Athens, Ohio where he majored in news with a non-associated area of academic concentration in sociology and psychology. He graduated cum laude with a BSJ in June 1967.

Post-graduation, Dave worked at the *Ann Arbor News* and *Ypsilanti Press*, and then as a sports writer for *Grand Rapids Press* for one year before returning to the *Ypsilanti Press* as sports editor. Three years later, he accepted a position as a sports writer at *The Pittsburgh* (Pa.) *Press*, where he worked for nearly 10 years until he was hired by Walt Disney World as a publicist in September 1981.

Dave lives in Central Florida with his wife of 45 years, Kathy, near their two grown daughters. He recently retired from a distin-

guished 30-year career with Walt Disney World.

### **What were working conditions like when you joined Disney?**

A lot of young people probably can't imagine Disney World with just one theme park. But that's what it was when I started with the company – the Magic Kingdom – and our offices were right smack in the middle of it! We were on the second floor of City Hall in Town Square with our typewriters. Remember those things? Our normal work hours were whatever it took to get the job done. Charlie Ridgway, who was the department head and also one of the two hardest-working people that I've ever been associated with in the workplace, made it clear that this wasn't a 9-to-5 weekday job. That's not a complaint; that's the nature of the job.

### **Did you find working in an office located in the Magic Kingdom distracting?**

Well, it certainly was hard talking over the three o'clock parade. We definitely did not start staff meetings when the



Dave Herbst

parade was stepping off just below us! Other than that, the location was certainly not what I'd call a distraction. To the contrary, it was some of the most wonderful ointment for a "blue day" you could ever imagine. Need an attitude adjustment? Just descend the stairs, go through the swinging gate in City Hall and bask in the smiles of guests. It was both a strange and wonderful work location.





Dave Herbest on Main Street USA celebrating Tencennial during his first week at Walt Disney World in 1982.

### **What were your most memorable experiences?**

Most were not just memorable but also wonderful – and they always had to do with people. One that was especially special involved a radio personality named J.P. McCarthy. He is no longer with us, but his memory is deservedly enshrined in the Radio Hall of Fame. J.P. hosted a long-form interview show called “Focus.” At Disney World, I was assigned Michigan as a publicity territory, and Charlie Ridgway mentioned to me, “If you’re going to Detroit, give my old friend J.P. McCarthy a call.” I thought, yeah – right. Then one morning my

phone rang, and when I answered, the caller said, “Good morning, Dave, this is J.P. McCarthy, and we’re live on WJR.” We chatted about what was new at Disney World. During a commercial, I shared Charlie’s comment, to which J.P. responded, “Give my producer a call and we’ll do something on ‘Focus.’” Wow! I traveled to Detroit, did a segment on Focus and we began a relationship that continued for the rest of J.P.’s life. Another of my top three career experiences would be that I got to write for *The Pittsburgh Press* – the newspaper I read as a kid. And, of course, getting to make a career telling the world about Walt

Disney World – which was our favorite family vacation place.

### **What were some of your greatest challenges?**

For me, the greatest challenge was – and is – keeping my mouth shut. I’m pretty outspoken. But I’ve rarely had a bone to pick with a person. So generally when I tell people what I think, it isn’t an attack on them. Fortunately, that’s been the way my contrary thoughts and opinions usually have been received. There’ve been no lawsuits or firings.

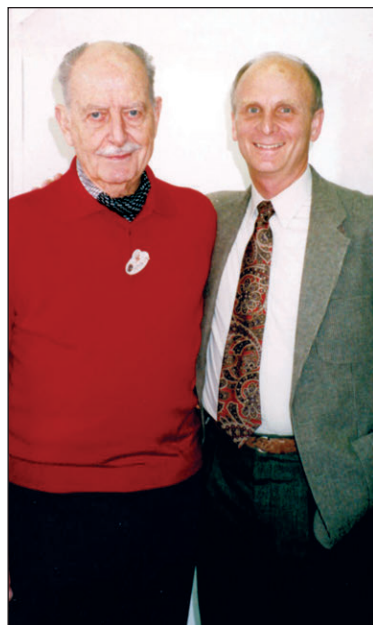
### **Which is your favorite theme park and why?**



I like each of the parks, but I do have a favorite: The Studios. Theme is the heart and soul of our company and the architecture there gives me chill bumps. The scale of the park is such that it is our "Disneyland." I know Magic Kingdom is the thematic sibling of Disneyland Park, but the size of the (Hollywood) Studios gives it a sense of intimacy that is so wonderful and comfortable. And I absolutely revel in the way the park meanders. As many times as I've been in that park, I still have to think about where I am. And then I still make wrong turns sometimes. I love that!

**Which is your favorite attraction and why?**

That is the single most diffi-



Dave in California with Disney Legend John Hench in 1982.

cult question I think you could ever ask. Indulge me while I dance around an answer – mainly because my preferences for attractions are like my preferences for music: they change depending upon the day – or sometimes the hour! I marvel at the layers of detail and creativity in so many of our attractions. If I name a favorite now, when my response is in print it will probably have changed.

**Which parks opened during your tenure and what were your department's responsibilities during the grand opening events?**

All the Walt Disney World parks except Magic Kingdom. We celebrated its 10th anniversary – we called it the "Tencennial" – beginning three days into my Disney career. Whenever we were opening a park, my department had responsibility for developing the news releases, photos and video, planning the aspects of "the event" and looking after the needs of news writers and reporters, photographers and video crews.

**Of the Disney executives you have met or worked with, who impressed you the most?**

Frank Wells impressed me profoundly. During a town hall forum for cast members, I was bold enough to say what I thought, which was definitely not the party line. He gave a thoughtful, measured answer, which provoked me to question when we were going to have pay toilets in our hotel rooms.

Fortunately, I was not removed from the room – or the payroll. I also wrote a letter to him to share an idea and was thrilled when Frank responded to a "relative nobody." But he didn't view people that way. One morning my phone rang. Luckily, I didn't say, "Hey, hon, what's for dinner," because it was Frank Wells. Talk about an OMG moment! He was following up on a call I'd made to corporate communications. After asking for my opinion on a matter, he paused and then made a decision about what we should do. Frank was amazing. Another was our department head, Charlie Ridgway. He had "stripes" – you know what I mean? But he never wore them. Instead, he wore work gloves. I remember him thanking me for working six days, and I thought: Charlie worked seven days!

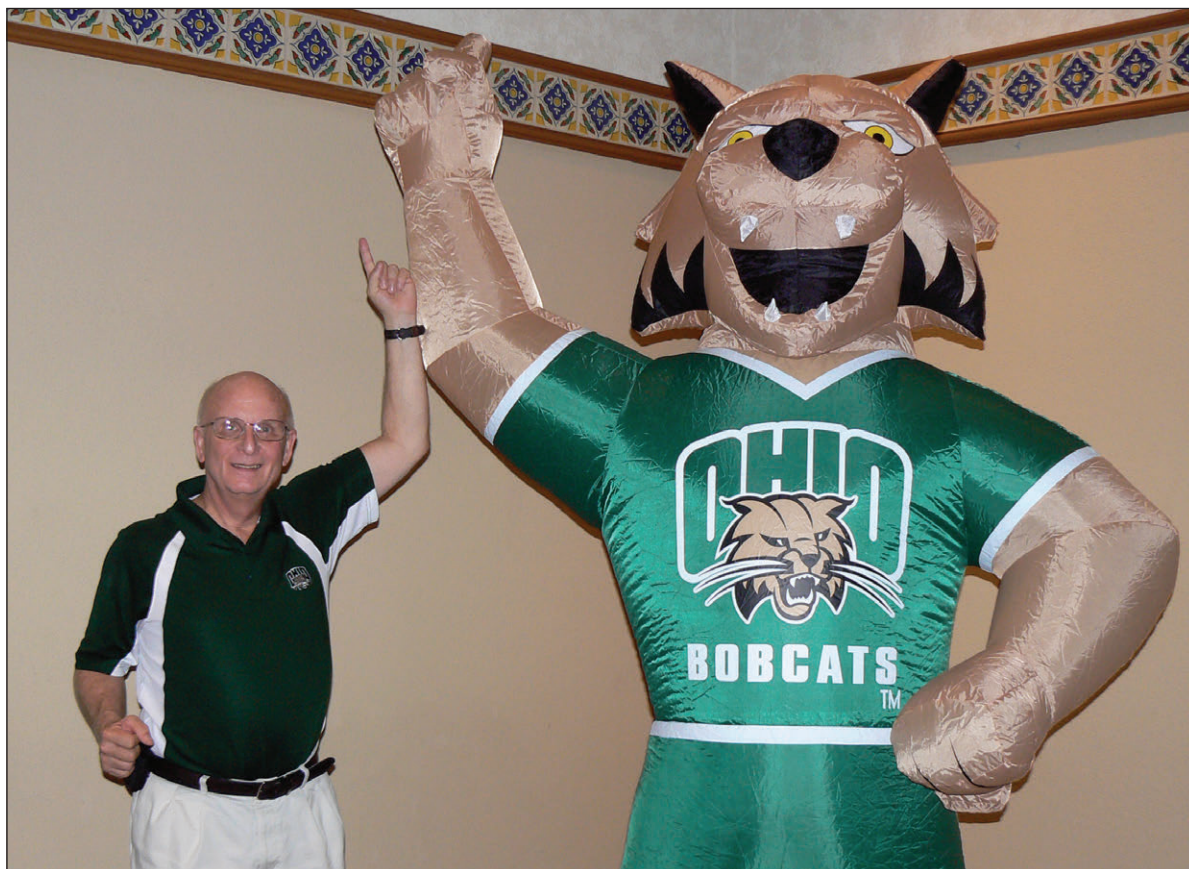
**If you could have had any job at Disney, what would you have chosen?**

I'm a storyteller. That's what I grew up doing – telling tall tales to my mother and sports reports to newspaper readers. I was perfectly cast to be a publicist. Disney liked what they saw of my storytelling within the bounds of journalism, and they hired me. I am grateful – profoundly grateful – that the company regarded that role as important enough that they let me be what I am for 30 years.

**If you could change anything about a park or attraction, what would you change and why?**

I feel that of anything actually





Dave strikes a pose with his beloved Ohio University Bobcat at his retirement party.

inside one of our parks, the Sorcerer's Hat at the Studios is the singular thing I can point to – not the hat per se, but the location. Here you have this place that is breathtakingly celebrating the golden age of Hollywood architecturally, and you plop down an oversized, out-of-place hat. It is a perfect candidate for implosion technology.

**What do you miss most, now that you are retired from the Walt Disney Company?**

Any time you move on or away, people are effectively removed from your life. It's sort

of like a divorce – your circle of relationships really changes when you leave a place. I miss my friends. Some wear Disney name tags and some, like yourself, don't. I honestly can't say I miss anything else, but I only retired the end of October! It hasn't really sunk in yet.

**Now that you are retired, what are you most looking forward to doing?**

Not always being pressed. I'm still trying to decompress! I'd like to write – maybe a memoir ... How's "Rat on The Mouse" sound? I've also had a concept for a board game in my

head for a quarter century. I am involved in my church and I have more time to devote to that now. I have a passion for teaching – and for the college I attended. Maybe something will happen there. It's too early to tell. Basically, "Brand Dave" is a freelance writer and editor – and I'd like to project the experience I have in communications as a consultant. But I'm not like some of the so-called consultants I've been around – I've got game! I'm really no big deal, but I sure made a career out of having fun. Oh, and one more thing: Go, Bobcats!



# Theme Park-Area Restaurant Experiences

Written by "SKIPPER" BEN REBSTOCK

I truly believe many of the restaurants in the Orlando theme parks are attractions onto themselves. If you skip out on them, you're missing a lot. So, if you want to pack your lunch or hit an off property diner to save a few bucks, that's fine. But if you want the full experience while visiting the parks, these are the top themed restaurants you have to try on your next trip.

## 10..... **Hard Rock Cafe** Universal CityWalk

Without the Hard Rock Cafe, this list wouldn't exist. The

Hard Rock Cafe is the granddaddy of themed restaurants, opening their first store in London in 1971. Hard Rock Cafe has been a staple of the Universal Orlando resort since the beginning, first as a part of the Universal Studios theme park and now as a part of CityWalk, where memorabilia from rock and roll legends line the walls of the largest Hard Rock Cafe in the world. Plus the iconic T-shirts sold in the gift shop make the perfect souvenir for anyone visiting the Orlando area.



## **T-Rex Cafe** Downtown Disney

By looking at the exterior of the building, with its mountain peaks and dinosaur skeletons, you could argue that T-Rex Cafe could be the most themed restaurant in Orlando. This relative newcomer (compared to others on this list) is big on set design and animatronics. You'll find life-size versions of a T-Rex, stegosaurus and woolly mammoth moving around you all too realistically while you try to enjoy your meal. Special shout out to the Ice Cave dining area, which is a great place to eat if you are feeling a little "blue."



## 9.....







# 8

## Margaritaville Universal CityWalk

Jimmy Buffett famously sang "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere," but at Margaritaville, it's 5 o'clock all the time. Once you enter, it's like you've stepped directly into the mind of the famous songwriter. The walls are covered with odes to many of his famous songs. The centerpiece of the restaurant is the large volcano above the bar that erupts margaritas every hour, filling up the extremely large blender as the song "Volcano" plays and waiters sing and stilt walkers dance throughout the restaurant. From airplanes hanging overhead to tables made out of boats, Margaritaville does not lack in theming one bit.



## Raglan Road

### Downtown Disney

Raglan Road brings a little bit of Ireland to Walt Disney World. The exterior is comprised of several architectural designs, making the one large building feel like several individual ones as if you were taking a stroll through Dublin. Inside, you get the feel of an old Irish pub. The dark woods on the floor and the booths lead to a large, open seating area. You'll find two stages, one for a live band that plays nightly, and one elevated stage that is used by performers showcasing classic Irish dances. The bars were actually shipped in from Ireland and are over 130 years old, easily making them the oldest bars at Walt Disney World.

# 7

## 6 Biergarten Epcot

If you haven't checked, it's very expensive to fly to Germany these days. So do the next best thing and head to the Germany Pavilion at Epcot, where the Biergarten Restaurant celebrates Oktoberfest all year long. Large, community tables inside this Bavarian-set dining room means that you will more than likely be raising your liters (or half-liters for you lightweights) of authentic German beer in the air with total strangers who will leave this impressive buffet as your friends. An Oom-Pah-Pah band will help you celebrate the occasion, and a large dance floor is provided so you can join in on the festivities. "Ziggy saki, ziggy saki, Oyl Oyl Oyl!"





# 5 **Three Broomsticks** Universal's Islands of Adventure



The Wizarding World of Harry Potter is the best themed area in any Orlando theme park, and that attention to detail is not lost in the Three Broomsticks Restaurant and Hog's Head Pub. The snow-capped rooftops seen from the streets of Hogsmeade give way to the high, arched ceilings of the Three Broomsticks that nearly exactly resemble the dining rooms found in the Harry Potter movies. The booths, tables and floors are worn down, making this two-year-old restaurant feel 100 years old. And at the Hog's Head, Butterbeer pours from taps in front of an impressive mounted re-creation of the animal for whom this pub is named.

# 4 **50's Prime Time Cafe** Disney's Hollywood Studios

Turn back the clock and enter a world that can only be found in family photo albums and on TV Land. Re-creation of the kitchens found in shows like "I Love Lucy" and "My Three Sons" is your dining area. Mom is in the kitchen, dad is back on the grill. The cousins you haven't seen in years are your wait staff. Keep your elbows off the table and eat all of your vegetables because the 50's Prime Time Cafe is more of an attraction than a restaurant. You'll be entertained with clips from classic television shows on old TV sets your kids will find strange looking. Take two parts great classic American food and mix in one part character acting and you've got a recipe for a really fun time.



# 3 **San Angel Inn Restaurante** Epcot

Deep inside the Aztec pyramid on the banks of World Showcase Lagoon sits quite possibly the most romantic dining setting at Walt Disney World. You'll dine under the stars from day to night at the San Angel Inn,

where a vibrant Mexican marketplace is buzzing on one side of you as boats drift along the rivers of time on the other. You'll sip on margaritas and enjoy chips and salsa under candlelight as the sounds of an authentic mariachi band will have you feeling as if you were in Mexico itself.





# 2 Cinderella's Royal Table Magic Kingdom

While there's a debate on the value and quality of the food, there's no doubt the setting of this restaurant makes its place on this list well deserving. I mean, you are dining "in" Cinderella Castle. You can enjoy a fine breakfast or a mighty feast for dinner in the presence of Disney royalty. High arched windows provide picturesque views of Fantasyland, or at least the construction wall around its future expansion for now. There is not a harder reservation to be had in Central Florida. This is the best themed restaurant in the Magic Kingdom, but will soon have stiff competition across the way when the Be Our Guest Restaurant opens.



# 1 Sci-Fi Dine-In Theater Restaurant

## Disney's Hollywood Studios

The Sci-Fi Dine-In is not just one of the finest themed restaurants at Walt Disney World, it is one of the best you'll find anywhere in the world. Turn back the clock and enjoy your meal at tables shaped as classic convertible cars as you eat under the stars and watch classic science fiction movies on a large drive-in movie screen. Waiters and waitresses roll around on roller skates (and your kids will quickly ask you what those are) as they recite lines from the movie loop that repeats every hour. After over 20 years, the Sci-Fi Dine-In remains a must visit restaurant on any trip to Walt Disney World.



**Skipper Ben** is a former Walt Disney World cast member. He worked at Jungle Cruise, Muppet\*Vision 3D and as a producer for Radio Disney. He now resides in Dallas, Texas, with his wife Lisa (also a former cast member) and daughters Abigail Lily and Alayna Iris.

**Do you agree with Ben or have a suggestion for a future Top 10?**

Let us know at [info@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:info@attractionsmagazine.com)





# Become a Master Magician

# Sorcerers of the

# Magic Kingdom

By Barbara Nefer

**Y**ou love watching heroes vanquish villains in classic Disney movies, but did you ever wish you could be the hero yourself? That's the idea behind Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom, a role-playing game that debuted

at its namesake theme park on Feb. 22, after a beta test

period. The game is free for Magic Kingdom

guests. Read on to see how you can become a Master Sorcerer.



The Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom game is played with spell cards. Each feature Disney movie characters and rhymes. They also give the spell's type and statistics. There are 70 to collect.



## Carefully Chosen Characters

While Sorcerer Mickey from "Fantasia" often takes the spotlight when magic is needed, Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom goes old school for its star. Your guide is Merlin the Magician from the 1963 animated film, "The Sword and the Stone." Just as he mentored young Wart, who turned out to be King Arthur, Merlin guides guests through their adventure.

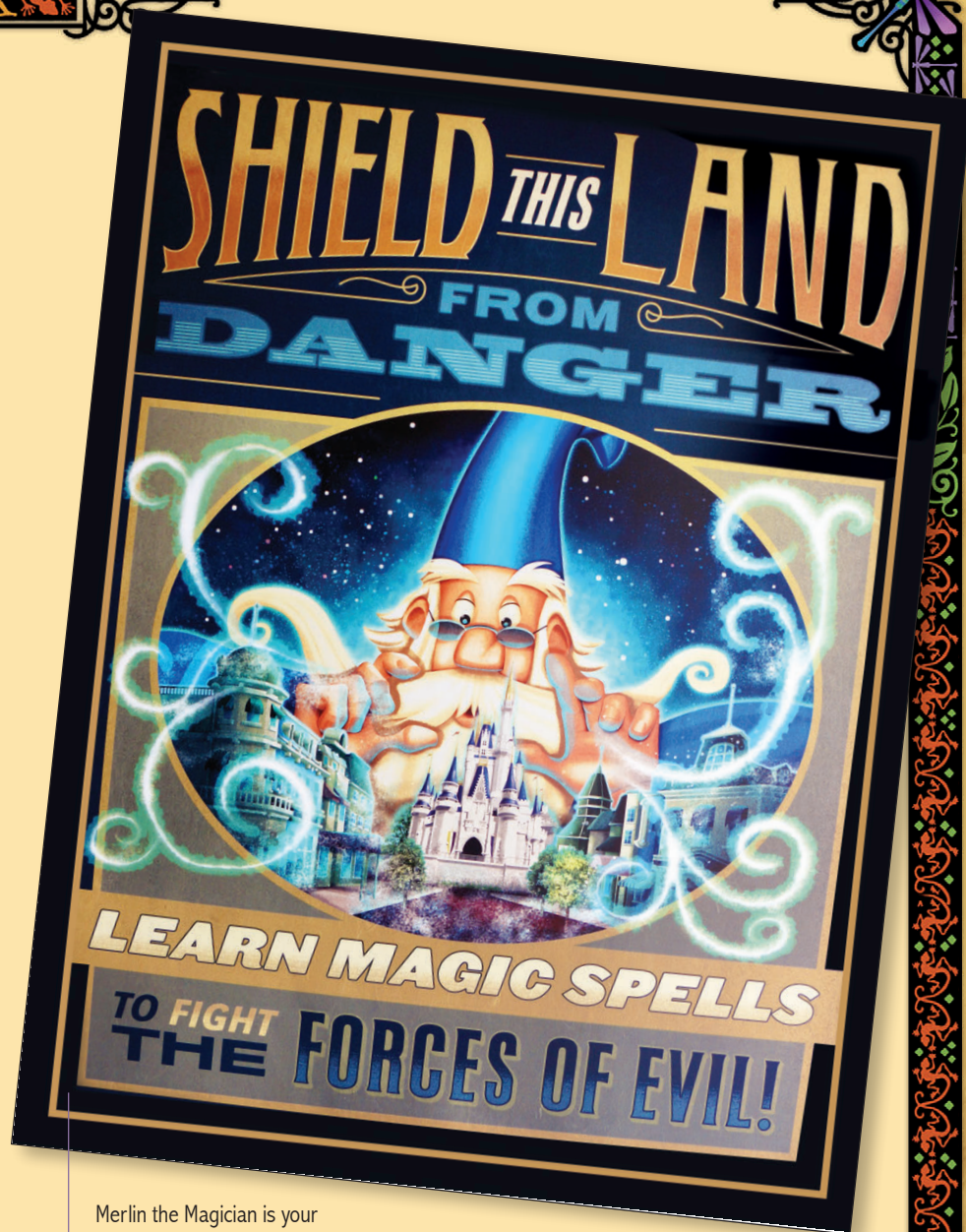
"We wanted a character who's powerful, but not so powerful that he can solve all the problems himself," Project Producer and Creative Director Imagineer Jonathan Ackley explained. "Merlin's like that, and he's just so funny. Humor is a big part of it because you want to entertain people."

Merlin fans will recognize many nods to the movie. "There are points where he travels through time. He travels to different locations, and he even shows up dressed in a Hawaiian shirt," Ackley said.

All of the animation is traditional rather than computer generated, with more than an hour and a half of footage created exclusively for the game. "We wanted these to be the characters you remember from the films," Ackley said. "We wanted to give greater representation to some of the lesser-used characters."

Hades stars as the main villain, and he's intent on taking over the Magic Kingdom. He was chosen because "he's so much fun," Ackley explained. "He brings a lot of humor, and he's one of the most powerful Disney villains. He has a subtlety that some of the others are lacking. Also, he has to get the other villains on his side, and that's true to how he was in the movie. James Woods is just amazing in the role."

Woods is not the only original voice actor you'll hear when you play the game. Ackley noted they used the original voices whenever they could.



Merlin the Magician is your guide as you battle villains to save the Magic Kingdom.

## A Very Different Attraction

The game is a flexible experience that fits into anything from a commando-style touring plan to a leisurely day in the park. "That's one of the greatest things about it," Imagineer Diego Parras explained. "If you want to start a mission, then do an attraction, have lunch, or whatever, you can come back out and play it later. Just break away

and do your thing, and you'll start right back up where you left off.

"Overall it has this whole story, with nine different chapters, culminating with the assault on Hades' underworld lair. But if you only want to play one mission, you can defeat a villain, feel good about yourself, and go on with the rest of your day at the Magic Kingdom.





The Dunkelberger family show off their favorite spell cards. Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom appeals to all ages.



Imagineer Jonathan Ackley has been working on the Sorcerers game for about four years.



The mystic portals have captions, making the game accessible for hearing impaired guests.

Your game progress is saved for several days, according to Parras. "Say you start your vacation in the Magic Kingdom, then go to other parks and come back here three days later. You can still go ahead and pick right back up on it where you left off," he explained.

If you're a dedicated gamer and want to play from start to finish, with no meal or bathroom breaks, it takes about two to three hours to finish the easiest level, according to Ackley. That includes eight different missions at 20 to 30 minutes per mission, plus the final round.

Once you conquer the first level, you can tackle medium and hard levels that take a little longer because you must cast more spells. That's offset by the time you save once you know the portal locations.

When you reach the end of the game and vanquish the final villain on each level, there's no tangible reward like a pin or certificate. Instead, you get a virtual "congratulations" on screen and the satisfaction of knowing that you saved the Magic Kingdom.

According to Ackley, "It's like playing your Xbox at home and beating a game."

### Popular From the Start

Even though it's still in its early stages, the game is already spawning a phenomenon akin to the Disney pin trading and Vinylmation crazes. Each guest gets five random cards to start the game and can get another set each day they visit the park. Spontaneous card trading started while the game was still being tested, as guests who wanted to build up a complete set, and those who simply wanted to expand on their spell repertoire, or collect their favorite characters, started swapping with other players they met at the portals.

"One of the biggest surprises for me was how social the game is between the guests playing," Ackley said. "We saw it from the very first day, when guests were already saying, 'What cards do you have? Do you have duplicates? Can I trade with you?' They're very passionate about the cards, and that makes it interactive, which is very cool."



We were hoping it would be that way.

"One thing we do see a lot, because people are all about collecting the cards, is that they're coming in with protective sleeves and boxes and albums. They're also finding their own ways to play and enjoy the game. One little girl had a sort of four-by-four holster filled with spell cards so she could hold them up and cast them all simultaneously. There's so much room to experiment. The guests are going to come up with styles of play we never even thought of."

### Cards and Spells

There are a total of 70 numbered spell cards, each of which has a symbol showing its scarcity. The most common cards are marked with a planet, while uncommon cards have a crescent moon, and rare cards have a star. Cards 61 to 70 are the rarest, indicated by a lightning bolt.

Spell cards fall into nine different spell categories, as indicated by the following labels and background colors: Mystic (blue), Warrior (dark blue), Hero (teal), Princess (purple), Fairy (pink), Monster (green), Animal (dark green), Toy (red), and Machine (black). The cards feature various Disney movie characters, from icons like Sorcerer Mickey to lesser known luminaries like Colonel Hathi the elephant and the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Spells have three different characteristics: attack, boost and shield. Each characteristic has a number indicating its power for that particular card. Spell types include Strong, Quick, Energy, Gross, Wishful and Charming, and they're tied directly into the character's talents, abilities and personality. For example, King Triton wields his famous trident, while Rapunzel has a hair whip attack and Bolt stuns villains with his super bark.

Although villains are easily defeated with any card in the beginner version of the game, nuances come into

This symbol marks the location of the mystic portals. It's embedded in the ground near each portal.



The mystic portals blend in seamlessly with their surroundings. You won't notice them until they're activated by your key card.



play in the more advanced versions. Spells get stronger if you use them repeatedly (but not too often), and you can use certain cards together to get a more powerful effect. Typically, the best combinations are characters from

the same movie, like Belle and her father Maurice, Wall-E and Eve, or Princess Tiana and Prince Naveen. Similar attacks, like those involving fire, cold, wind, or even pumpkins, are often more powerful when combined.

### Portals and Villains

Mystic portals are located around Main Street and in various spots in Fantasyland, Adventureland, Frontierland and Liberty Square, and each land has its own villains and helpers. You'll face Cruella De Vil on Main Street and be assisted by Pongo. Maleficent and Ursula fight you in Fantasyland, where you're helped out by Merryweather and Sebastian. Governor Ratcliffe and Dr. Facilier lurk in Liberty Square and Frontierland, and Pocahontas and Mama Odie lend you a hand. Adventureland has three villains, Yzma, Scar, and Jafar, with Emperor Kuzco, Rafiki, and Genie as your guides.

Although the portals are new additions, Parras pointed out that great care was taken to make sure they fit in seamlessly. "They look like they've been in place since the park opened up," he said, "so it's not like

we've put in something that's visually intrusive. You walk through and think they've always been here." Many of the portals have special effects, and at night the outdoor locations incorporate special lighting.

After you do battle at a portal, you're told where to go for your mission's next step. If you go to the wrong portal, a message reminds you where you're supposed to go. Often, the best way to find them is to look for the circular symbol on the ground that indicates where you should stand while playing.

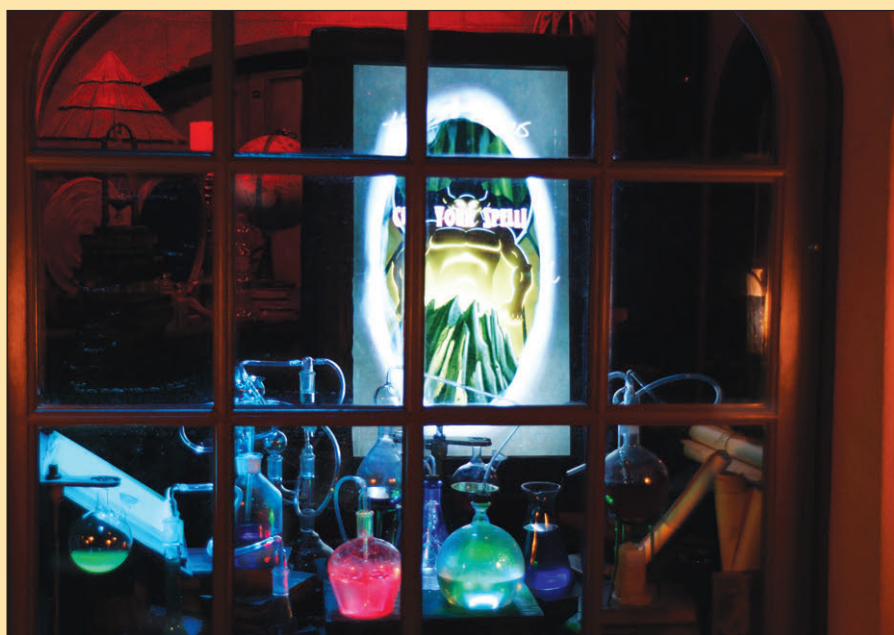
### Game Play

Game play starts at one of the two recruitment centers, which are located in the Firehouse on Main Street and behind the Christmas Shoppe in Liberty Square. Although there are three levels, everyone starts with the easy level. Your park ticket gets scanned, and you get a key card to activate the mystic portals, a set of five spell cards, and a map to the portals. If you're playing with a group, everyone gets their own set of cards.

Next, Merlin gives you the back-



Some of the mystic portals are located indoors, while others are outside in windows and walls.



There's theming around the mystic portals, and you trigger actions at some of them, such as these boiling cauldrons.



story of Hades' plan to take over the Magic Kingdom and charges you with the responsibility of stopping him by recovering a magic crystal. He gives you instructions on how your cards work. Then he tells you the location of your first portal, and you're off to start the mission.

You'll always come out on top at the easy level, earning the status of Master Sorcerer if you defeat all nine missions. If you wish to continue, bring your key card to a recruitment center to access the next harder level.

The medium and hard levels involve more spells, and it's possible to lose battles. You're required to figure out which spells are most potent against which villains, which ones they can resist, and how to combine your cards most effectively. You can use up to six spells together at one time. You'll have to experiment to find the most effective spells and combinations.

## Broad Appeal

Sorcerers of the Magic Kingdom is proving popular with a broad base of guests, according to Imagineer Ackley. "People seem to be really loving it and coming back day after day. What's cool is that we're getting little boys, little girls in princess costumes, retiree couples, hardcore gamer teens, families, and moms and dads, with everybody playing together."

Although game play is the big appeal, Ackley said, "It's not just about the battles. There's also the treasure

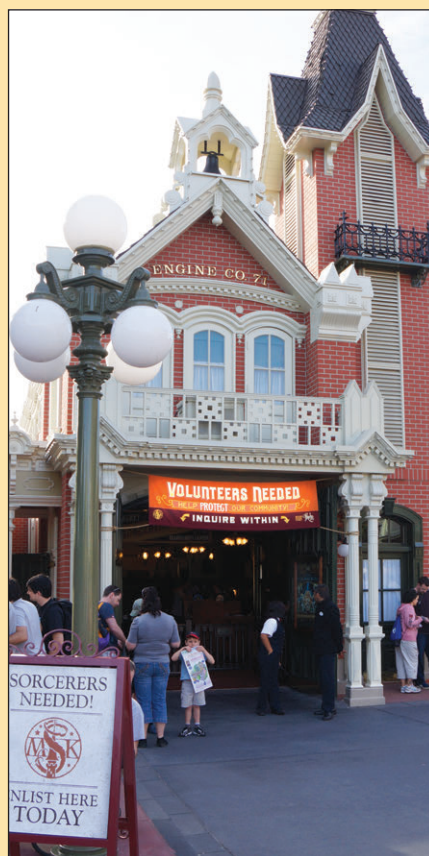


A map guides you on your adventure, with portal locations marked by special symbols. You'll find out where to go next each time you finish a battle.

hunt aspect of it. We get feedback from guests who are annual passholders, and they tell us, 'I never went into the back of Tortuga Tavern before.' We're sending them places and showing them details they've never seen. And if someone is here for the first time, they can definitely learn much of the park by playing."



Look for this lock symbol at each stop. It activates the mystic portal when you touch it with your key card.



The Firehouse on Main Street USA is the main recruiting spot for would-be sorcerers.



# JAWS

## BIDDING FAREWELL TO A CLASSIC ATTRACTION

**By Michael Corbisiero**

**Special Thanks to AmityBoatTours.com and The Jaws Log**

It's January 2012. The weather is cool and the sky is partly cloudy. It's not July weather at all, and yet today is the last day patrons will be able to celebrate the Fourth of July on Amity Island.

For nearly 20 years, Captain Jake's Amity Boat Tours has been serving the public with tours of Amity Island and "accidental" encounters with the great white from the "Jaws" movie at Universal Studios Florida. On this day, the last boat tour will embark on a harrowing encounter with the creature, and the land that is Amity will be no more. Climb aboard and take a trip with us as we plunge through the waters of the Jaws ride's history, learn of just how such a complex attraction worked and bid farewell to those happy landlubbers one last time.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL ORLANDO

With more than seven acres of land, Jaws held five million gallons of water, needed 2,000 miles of fiber-optic cable, and required 10,000 cubic yards of concrete to be poured with 7,500 tons of reinforced steel.



## Origins

It was the success of the Universal Hollywood Studio Tour that spurred the company into considering building a theme park in the Orlando area. King Kong, being a centerpiece of the tour, was naturally chosen to be a part of the concept. However, there were other blockbuster contenders to be chosen, based on other segments of the tour and Universal's extensive library of films.

Before it was Universal Studios, it was Universal City Florida. The initial proposal would have made a majority of the park a Tram Tour that would have taken guests around to different attractions based on Universal's blockbuster films. A shift was made in concept, and it was decided that guests should be able to walk on sets and experience the movies first-hand.

Steven Spielberg came on board as a creative consultant, and the resort's first slogan, "Ride the Movies", carried more depth. Being considered a blockbuster and having a huge impact on pop culture, Jaws was chosen as one of the park's tentpole attractions. With Jaws came the idea to build Amity Island around it. This seemed natural, as "Kongfrontation" was to be built in a recreation of New York, and "Earthquake ... The Big One" was to be constructed in the park's version of San Francisco.

Ride and Show Engineering was hired to design and construct the Jaws ride. The company struggled with just how to bring the great white shark to life for guests. After some time, a proposal was made. Guests would board a boat and embark on a tour of Amity with a Skipper (played by an actor), during which something would inevitably go wrong, and patrons would come face to face with the infamous great white shark from the films. This concept was approved and construction promptly began.

## Grand Opening

Universal Studios Florida opened on June 7, 1990. All three of the technically complex attractions that opened during the theme park's debut suffered from issues and delays. The kinks were eventually worked out of Earthquake and Kongfrontation, while Jaws continued to see closures throughout its limited time of operation.

What was originally in place followed fairly close to the modern version of the attraction, until the end, in which tour boats were "grabbed" and spun a full 360 degrees



The queue of Jaws was said to hold up to 2,127 people. Its "extended" queue was often used as a haunted maze during the annual Halloween Horror Nights events.

by the shark animatronic (with the use of a turn table). In the final showdown, instead of the creature grabbing a barge wire and dying from electrocution, it was shot with a grenade launcher by the skipper. It then traveled underneath the boat and "exploded" in a fine mist of water, guts and blood.

In what can be seen as an interesting parallel, the production of the attraction faced a similar fate as the production of the film. Due to the complex effects breaking and the attraction's lengthy down-time, it was decided the Jaws ride would be closed and completely re-worked, with a significant amount of time and money spent.

## Overhaul

During the ride's downtime, the innards of the attraction were completely reworked with a brand new finale sequence. Upon exiting the boathouse, guests experienced an explosion resulting in flames *leaping* across the water in place of the great white spinning the boat 360 degrees. The end scene involved a cue from "Jaws 2", in which the great white grabs ahold of the wire to an electric barge, thus frying the creature.

Further changes went into the behind-

the-scenes part of the ride, which included the programming of the boats and their track, the animatronic sharks, additional effects and so on. The story of the ride was reworked with a new script for skippers to follow, as well as audio cues. The original incarnation was noted as more serious in tone, whereas the "new" rendition was notably tongue-in-cheek with queue videos that played off the film being a "work of fiction."

In 1993, Jaws reopened its doors under Captain Jake's Amity Boat Tours. Steven Spielberg and stars from the original film were present to welcome the brand new attraction. The ride was better received and, of course, far more reliable than its previous incarnation. The attraction would continue to entertain and inspire both guests and personnel for years to come.

## Captain Jake's Amity Boat Tours

The inner workings of the Jaws ride and amount of effort pumped into the engineering and development was staggering, to say the least.

The attraction began with guests boarding a boat, which was a vehicle especially



created to run on a track with animatronic arms to move it in certain segments. All of the attraction's sound were kept on the boat and played over the speakers, to ensure the upmost consistency in delivery throughout the ride.

At the front of the boat was a skipper, a performer trained in safety and acting to immerse guests into the experience, while also keeping their well being in mind. Guests were transported around a light-house just as a distress signal was heard. A sunken orca was seen with the protrusion of the great white's dorsal fin (one of several animatronics constructed).

After two failed attempts to shoot the creature, it traveled under the boat, and the vehicle rocked (with the use of the animatronic arms underneath). A boathouse came into view, and the skipper guided us into it. Fog clouded the space and no light could seep through the doors.

The great white, eager to get inside, banged on the walls of the boathouse. Frightened, the Skipper forced the boat into gear after a couple failed attempts. The great white leaped out of the water and grazed the starboard side of the boat.

Guests were transported quickly outside of the boathouse and arrived at a fuel pump station. The creature emerged from the water again, port side. Another miss from the grenade launcher sets off a chain reaction, which employed one of the largest controlled fire effects ever seen in an attraction.

The boat traveled through a wall of fire and arrived at an electrical barge, where guests were told they would be exiting. But the great white lunged toward the boat and bit on the high voltage wire, killing it. The

skipper, relieved, prepared guests to head toward the exit, but not without landing one more blow on the beast with a grenade launcher. Guests were advised to not talk about the events that occurred, because after all, they did get him, didn't they?

## The original production and culture of Jaws

The Jaws movie originally boasted a 55-day shooting schedule and a \$4 million budget. The shoot lasted 155 days, and the budget bloated to \$9 million. It was Steven Spielberg's second theatrical film and he was concerned it'd be his last. Shooting on the open water (instead of a tank) with three animatronic sharks was an ambitious task. There were days on the set where poor weather, equipment failure, the animatronic shark failing, or perhaps a mixture of all three would result in no scenes being shot.

Despite the torturous production, the film won countless awards and acclaim. It has since been ranked the seventh highest grossing film in North America of all time (adjusted for inflation), as well as deemed "culturally significant" by the U.S. Library of Congress, and preserved in the National Film Registry. Steven Spielberg, of course, went on to build a respectable legacy of films.

Michael Roddy is one of the producers that helped create "The Shark is Still Working," a documentary that discusses the impact and legacy of "Jaws", rather than the making of. He's also extensively worked with Universal, Disney, Busch Gardens, and others on entertainment projects in their parks.

Roddy recalled seeing the film in 1975, during its original release and immediately latching on to it. "It inspired me to tell stories, in any medium or form." He has since worked with theme parks, telling stories through theatre productions, events and the like.

"Fanaticism is often dismissed as something bad," said Roddy, "but I disagree. Fanaticism can inspire great things." Other storytellers can attest to being inspired to create by their passion for "Jaws". Bryan Singer, Robert



Choosing to place the creatures in water proved to be challenging, as water causes five hundred times more resistance than air. To compensate, each shark had to reach the force of a 747 jet engine to be successfully propelled.

Rodriguez, Tom Savini and Kevin Smith are just a few.

But the impact of "Jaws" goes beyond the creative field of entertainment. Inspired by "Jaws", oceanographers and the like were fascinated with learning more about creatures in the ocean. Despite a fear of the creatures, curiosity has inspired many to seek out more information about great whites, and conservation efforts have been made in lieu of the film's release.

The attraction boasted a similar effect. Skippers, performers who tied all of the attraction's elements together, went through a rigorous audition and training process. The community of personnel involved with the attraction bonded and was tight-knit throughout its run. Roddy recalled, "The skippers were as much of a performer as the actors in other productions of the park. Every time I'd see them, they'd put 150 percent into their roles."

Guests found themselves enamored with the attraction. "It's a brilliant premise of Man vs. Nature," said Roddy. As such, it's an easy concept to understand. Old and young could enjoy the attraction, even if they hadn't seen the film. Jaws itself is one of the most ingrained notions in popular culture, and not every theme park ride can attest to using such an iconic property.

In 2005, major storms hit the coast of Florida, and the Jaws ride was subsequently



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL RODDY

Michael Roddy is one of the producers of the upcoming documentary "The Shark is Still Working", and he has worked extensively with many theme parks in Central Florida.

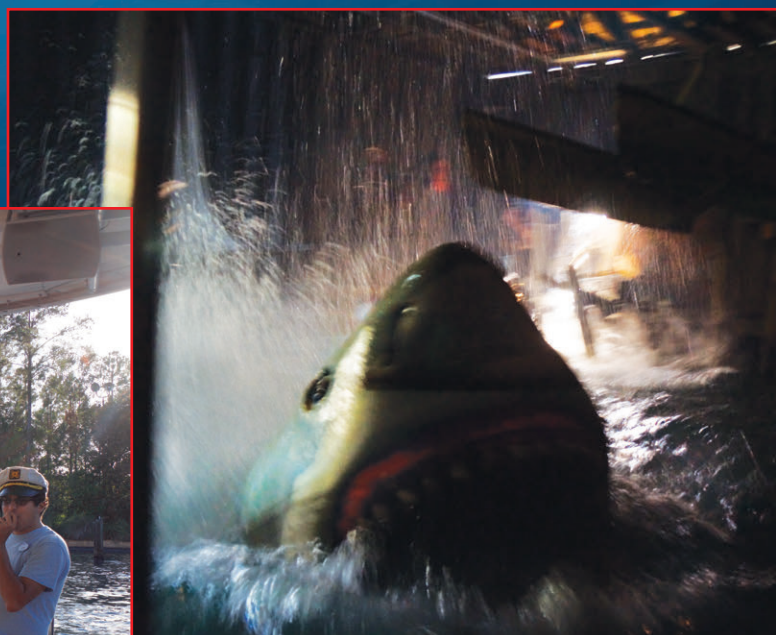




Four animatronic sharks controlled by pressurized hydraulic fluid were created for the ride. Each were 32 feet long and weighed over three tons.



Jaws Final Voyage guests pose in front of the iconic creature with their tickets in hand to commemorate the attraction's closure.



As one of the largest controlled fire effects ever in a theme park, the "gas dock" scene was believed to be one of the reasons Jaws was temporarily shut down after the major storms of 2005.



closed due to a steep rise in the cost of petroleum. The attraction was later re-opened as strictly a "seasonal" ride during peak times of the year. Reportedly, guest complaints soared, and the Jaws ride was re-opened full time, with a certain period of time set aside each year for extensive maintenance.

The great white continued terrorizing guests until the end of 2011, when Universal sent out a brief press release announcing the attraction's closure. Something else would be taking the several acre space of Amity, and the exhaustive task of demolishing the attraction was being prepped including the filing of permits, which tipped off fans of the ride weeks before the announcement.

## The Last Boat Tour

Universal announced the attraction's last day as Jan. 2, 2012. On this day, fans and patrons alike visited the park to bid farewell. Toward evening, the animatronic shark at the end broke down, which those familiar with the film's hectic production found fitting.

Some chose to remember the attraction as it was in its prime, while others ventured



Amity Island was designed after Martha's Vineyard, which was used in the film. Not only did the area boast games, but it also housed the inner workings of the ride, such as the pipes that sent pressurized hydraulic fluid to the animatronic sharks, fiber-optic cables for power, and so forth.



The sinking Amity tour boat effect, left, required a complex mechanic that allowed it to "sink" then reset after each passing ride vehicle. Right, both Neptune's Folly and the Amity Police boat were placed outside Jaws after being used in the film "Jaws: The Revenge".





# FAREWELL

As of press time, the replacement for the Jaws ride and Amity area hadn't been announced, but strong rumors point to The Wizarding World of Harry Potter expanding in this area with Hogwarts Express taking guests from Universal Studios to The Wizarding World of Harry Potter in Universal's Islands of Adventure theme park.

Following the attraction's closure, we reached out for your thoughts. The response was enormous and, while we don't have the space to print all of them, we appreciate everyone who took the time to write.

**"If I could impart one thing to someone who never got to ride it, I'd say it gave you the opportunity to really put yourself in the middle of a movie, which was the slogan of the park: 'ride the movies.'**

**"Jaws was the anchor to the park, and without it, it's completely different. It's like leaving high school and coming back and realizing things have changed. It'll never be the same again."**

J. Michael Roddy  
Co-Producer of "The Shark is Still Working"

**"Since I was eight, I wanted to be a Jaws Skipper - getting to experience working at the attraction for eight years, and building a website based off of people's love for the ride has been one of the greatest things I've had the pleasure of working on. It's devastating to see the attraction go, but I will always remember all of the memories the ride created. Farewell and Adieu."**

Skipper Nick  
Owner of AmityBoatTours.com

**"Over the years, the people I went to the parks with changed; family, friends, and when I worked at the parks I went a lot by myself before and after work. It didn't matter if it was an ordinary day or Halloween Horror Nights, it didn't matter if it was**

**95 degrees outside, if it was raining, or if it was freezing cold. It didn't matter to me if I skipped going on this ride or that ride, skipped seeing this show or that show, no visit to Universal was complete without a trip on Captain Jake's Amity Boat Tours. I miss King Kong, I miss Back to the Future, I miss Hanna Barbera and Jimmy Neutron, and now I'll miss Jaws.**

**"I realized something profound when I was talking with a friend about this; you can close old rides and build brand new state of the art attractions, but you can never truly "replace" an attraction and what it means to its fans."**

Jon Barrios  
Longtime Universal Fan

**"I didn't start at Jaws at first. I was placed at Kongfrontation. It was a fun ride, but Kong was the star, and I couldn't compete with a 34-foot-tall monkey robot. I wanted to be at Jaws so badly. You were the skipper of a boat and the shark wasn't in front of you all the time. Ego aside, it was just so damn cool to blow up stuff with a 40 mm grenade launcher!**

**"Eventually I was transferred over to Captain Jakes and relished every minute of it. I also became a trainer. So many fond memories. Ninety-five percent of my friends in Orlando are past Jaws skippers. I love them so much. We had a blast! So many stories...the memories are flooding my head as I write this.**

**"When I heard that my attraction was closing late last year, I was stunned. The Jaws attraction is a touchstone for me whenever I go back to Florida. It's (was) a must. The smell of the dead shark, the sounds of the island, the fire ... everything - Gone. It was tough riding it for the last time in January, knowing I'd never see it in person again. All I have is memories and that brings a bittersweet**

**smile to my face. I'm lucky enough to have one of my tours on DVD. I look back at it from time to time. Man, I was young, and Universal was cool.**

**"Not so much anymore. I'll always know the spiel word for word for as long as I live, and reflect on one of the greatest jobs I've ever had on the planet. R.I.P. Captain Jake."**

Jon Donahue  
Former Jaws Skipper/Trainer

**"I had the privilege of being a skipper for a little over three years.**

**"Believe it or not, I used to mimic the ride when I was 4 years old, giving kids a variation of my experience in a little red radio flyer wagon around the neighborhood. I would employ water hoses, open garages and other neighborhood friends to try and recreate the experience for my peers.**

**"When I was 16 and finally got my permit, I began giving "Amity Jeep Tours" with a copy of the audio that I received from some of the ride's creators that I was lucky enough to meet at a younger age.**

**"When I was 18, I traveled down to Orlando with three of my closest friends and rode the ride non-stop for an entire day. We ended up creating a video called "The Jaws Ride Challenge" where I was able to actually take the mic for a short while and perform my own tour. Little did I know, this was my audition for the real thing... I spoke to the acting supervisor on the phone a few months after that and ended up arranging an audition to be a skipper starting summer of 2007.**

**"My first tour with guests was incredible. It was something I had always dreamed of doing from such a young age and it was almost surreal. I yelled, I ran back and forth, and gave it everything I had. It was without a doubt the most fun I had ever had."**

John Bernard  
Jaws Skipper (2007-2010)



By Seth Kubersky

# TITANIC: THE EXPERIENCE

Entertainment, education, and emotion entwine in this I-Drive attraction



The Ship of Dreams sails again (in mural form, at least) on International Drive.



Costumed guides use a schematic to illustrate Titanic's deadly design to visitors.



Titanic's opulent first-class accommodations have been recreated in exacting detail, down to the period furniture and furnishings.

When the Costa Concordia cruise shipwrecked on a Mediterranean reef in January, the scene of deadly chaos inspired comparisons from reporters and victims alike to the R.M.S. Titanic, a tragedy that occurred decades before any of them were born. In early April, director James "King of the World" Cameron will re-release his romantic blockbuster based on the

doomed voyage – this time in trendy 3D. And on the 15th of that month, the world will mark the 100th anniversary of the transatlantic oceanliner's iceberg-induced sinking in the frigid North Atlantic.

All of that makes this spring the ideal time to brush up on the life and death of history's most famous boat, and there's no better way to do that than at Titanic: The Experience. This International Drive attrac-



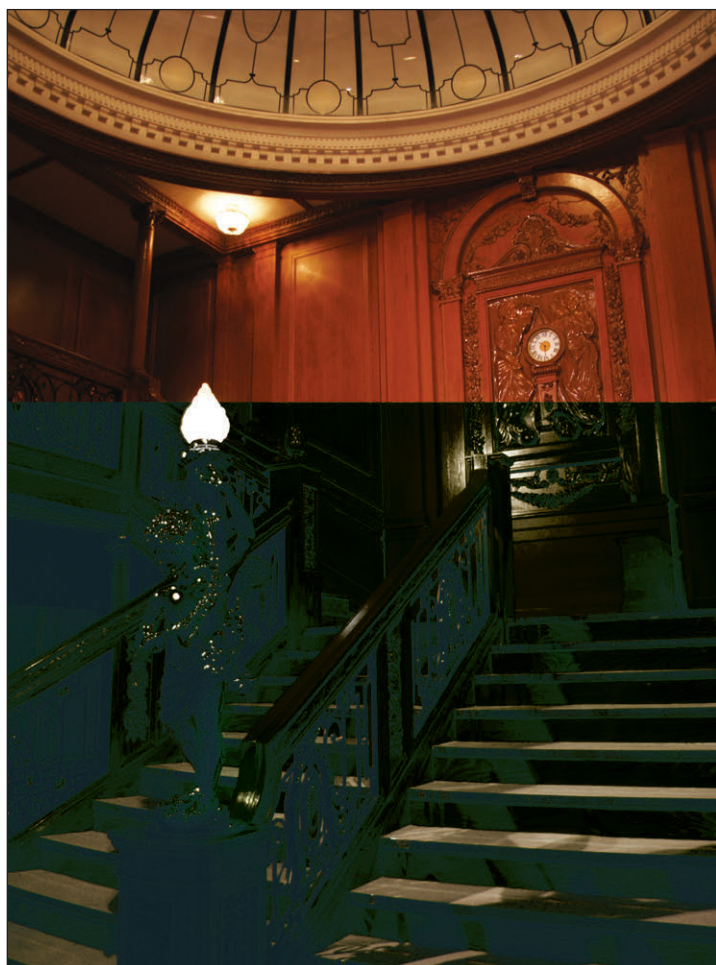
tion is more than a mere museum; it is an immersive walk-through experience that uses costumed live actors and meticulously detailed sets to transport you back into a lost era of Edwardian opulence.

Your historical adventure begins as you leave the carnival-like cacophony of International Drive and enter the lobby of Titanic: The Experience, which serves double-duty as a well-appointed gift shop. The "boarding pass" you are handed is emblazoned with the name and biography of an actual passenger, which becomes your assigned identity for the duration of the tour. You may be a First Class passenger like Mr. Arthur H. Gee, an international businessman bound for Mexico City. Or you could be a third class Class passenger like Ms. Jamila Nicola-Yarred, a 14-year-old Lebanese girl fleeing religious persecution with her younger brother. Your social standing will have a large effect on your eventual odds of survival; your final fate is only revealed at the end by searching for your surrogate on a memory wall inscribed with victims' names. The

identification can be extremely affecting emotionally, with some visitors moved to tears.

The Titanic began life in a Belfast, Ireland, shipyard, and so does your tour – or a simple simulation of one, with a large photograph of the vessel under construction visible through the "window." In the shadow of a scale replica of Titanic's massive propeller, you are introduced to the first of several live performers who will guide you through the exhibit. Each embodies a different historical personage associated with the ship, complete with period costumes and hairstyles. You might meet anyone from Capt. Smith down to a serving maid. The actors are all avid researchers of their roles, and do an impressive job of staying in character; on a recent visit we had a detailed discussion with our host about his supposed hometown of Elkins Park, Penn.

From the Southampton ship dock, the tour travels



The Grand Staircase is a highlight of Titanic: The Experience, and an understandably popular backdrop for wedding photos.





Newly-exhibited artifacts include playing cards and cash money, miraculously preserved under the ocean for nearly a century.



An enormous piece of Titanic's steel skin is hanging in the tour's new finale.

across the gangway and into Titanic herself. The 17 galleries feature full-scale replicas of Titanic's most iconic environments, including a plush First Class Parlor Suite, the elegant Verandah Cafe, the infamous

boiler room, and even the outdoor Promenade Deck, where you can bask in the chilly ocean air and twinkling faux-starlight. The most impressive recreation in the attraction is the stunning Grand Staircase, constructed with exacting attention to detail down to the last handrail carving and chandelier crystal. Little wonder it has been a popular site for Titanic-themed wedding ceremonies.

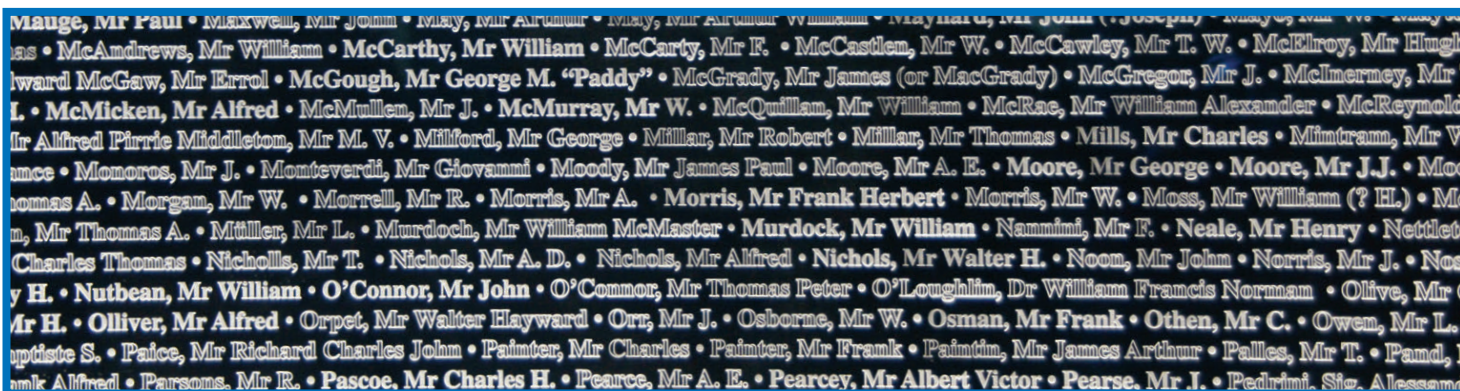
Long-time Orlando visitors may recall an earlier incarnation of Titanic at the now-demolished Mercado shopping center a few minutes south of its current location. The attraction has gone through a number of relocations since first opening in 1999, including a brief stint at the Orlando Science Center, though the

bulk of the display galleries' scenic elements have remained essentially unchanged. A more significant upgrade occurred this year, after the attraction's original founder G. Michael Harris (an underwater adventurer who helped his 13-year-old son Sebastian set the Guinness World Record for "Youngest Diver to the Titanic") sold the operation to RMS Titanic, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Premier Exhibitions. (On April 15, Premier will auction off all their Titanic-related artifacts and legal rights in a single lot, with the understanding that their new owner will preserve the collection and keep the attraction open.)

The current owner is the only entity legally entitled to recover and display artifacts from the wreck of the Titanic, which they have held exclusive salvage rights to since 1987. Accordingly, they have supplemented the existing collection of replicas and contemporaneous vintage artifacts with more than 100 authentic items actually dis-

covered in and around the sunken ship, many of which have never been exhibited before. (You can identify these new pieces by their black labels with white text and the White Star logo). One of the more fascinating is an array of monetary bills, playing cards and other paper goods that are in remarkably good condition. All were found closed inside leather bags, whose traditional tanning process prevented microbes from devouring the documents. Equally miraculous is the unbroken bottle of champagne, its intact cork still poised to pop. In the Grand Staircase, you can compare actual fragments of woodwork and crystal to the recreation in front of you. There are also more prosaic artifacts to be seen, like cookware, floor tiles, razor blades and even a toilet handle.

The pièce de résistance of Titanic's additions is a two-ton slice of the outer hull's steel skin. Found near the tour's finale, the massive 10-foot-tall slab hangs suspended off the floor so that you can



Large panels engraved with the identities of Titanic's victims and survivors inspire an emotional climax to the experience.





Above, early Gillette disposable razor blades recovered from the wreck. Top right, assorted dinnerware from Titanic's sister ships in the White Star line. Right, an actual porthole frame from the Titanic are among items accessible for viewing within the attraction.



observe it from various angles. Dubbed "Little Big Piece," the second-largest section of the ship ever recovered (its bigger brother is on display in Las Vegas' Luxor hotel) required two recovery attempts before it was successfully raised from 12,500 feet below the ocean surface in 1998. The mangled metal, which once shielded the ship's dishwashing room, is impressively well-preserved, with stretched rivet holes still testifying to the dramatic forces that tore it asunder.

More than a mere amusement attraction, the Titanic experience contains enough authenticity to appease history buffs. And cinephiles aren't forgotten either; fans of Kate and Leo will find memorabilia from their movie, along with James Horner's Oscar-winning score, repeating from the speakers. But if the 70-minute tour isn't enough, consider attending the Saturday night "Titanic Dinner Event." For

\$64.99 per adult plus tax (\$39.95 children 6-11) you can join the "Widener Party" for a recreation of Capt. Smith's retirement party, held on board hours before the iceberg was struck. After taking an abbreviated version of the tour, you'll dine in a banquet hall alongside a full cast of performers. Luckily, the menu doesn't include oxtail or smoked sardines, both popular entrees in the first class dining room. Instead, you'll be served a three-course meal featuring glazed chicken and filet of beef, capped by the captain's favorite cake.

With cross-generational appeal and a reasonable ticket price (\$21.95 adults, \$12.95 children 3-11), Titanic: The Experience is an ideal way to spend a couple of hours with the family on an Orlando afternoon. I-Drive has plenty of high-speed go-karts and sky-high thrill rides, but this might be the neighborhood's most moving attraction.



Guests of all ages can touch a wall of ice to simulate the extreme cold on the night of Titanic's demise.



# Resort Report







# ORLANDO WORLD CENTER

## IT'S THE WORLD'S LARGEST MARRIOTT

But you'll be relaxing in no time

W

ith its tall, palm tree-lined tropical landscape, an amazing pool with waterfalls, golf course and so much more on 200 acres, the Orlando World Center Marriott and Convention Center truly lives up to its title as the world's largest Marriott. Yet, surprisingly it's not too overwhelming. The design's angles and curves provide intimate spaces for a more relaxed feel.

The glass-enclosed lobby is bright and welcoming. The concierge desk is front and center to direct you to where you need to go. Registration and the bell stand are to your left, but you may want to head to Starbucks or the lobby gift shop to your right.

There are two elevator shafts in the main building, so make sure you get on the right one for your floor. The glass elevator that goes up to the top floor has a wonderful view, but you may want to ask for a lower floor if you have vertigo.

There is a modern and elegant tropical decor in the rooms and hallways. The hotel has 2,000 rooms and suites that offer you many different options to suit your needs. The standard rooms

are spacious with soft beds full of comfy pillows. They also offer a nice business desk with a power bar to plug in all your gadgets. The flat screen television offers movies for rent, some still in theaters as well as a wide selection of favorites. The rooms have a coffee maker, but no refrigerator. But they offer them as rentals. Standard rooms with king-size beds also have a nice reading chair with an ottoman plus sleeper sofa.

The suites are beautiful and large, starting with the Executive Suite at 550 square feet, all the way to the massive International Suite which is bigger than most houses at 3,600 square feet overlooking the spectacular pool.

It's wonderful that all the rooms have balconies. It's so nice to be able to sit outside and watch Epcot's fireworks at night or have a nice view







The World Center Marriott really lights up at night.



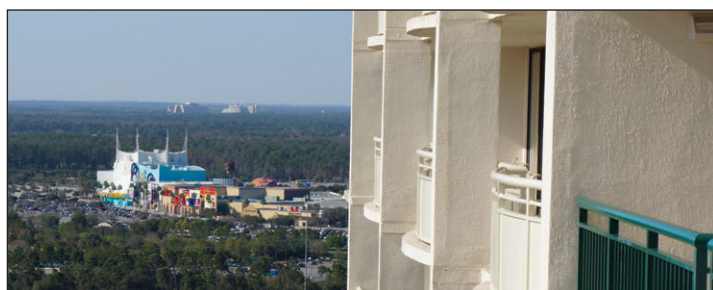
The king-size rooms offer more space and a pull-out sleeper sofa.

while you drink your coffee in the morning. The beautiful pool looks very inviting in the morning.

The 600,000 gallon lagoon-shaped pool features waterfalls and a 106-foot-long water slide. As if that wasn't enough, there are also three additional pools, two children's pools and six hot tubs. The 24-hour fitness center is well equipped to keep you in shape while on your vacation.

The spa and nail salon provide a wide variety of services to help you unwind and relax. The locker rooms have a wet sauna, shower and everything else you need to enjoy your spa experience.

The kids are not forgotten. There's an outdoor kids' sand play area and a kids' center with many activities, but it's not a babysitting service. Some activities have a small cost, like "paint



Top, the resort isn't far from Downtown Disney. You can also see Epcot's fireworks from many rooms. This hot tub is just one of six around the property.



# Orlando World Center Marriott



The Restorante Tuscany offers dining inside the restaurant and "outside" in the lobby area.

your own piggy bank." If you would like a babysitter you can ask at the concierge desk for a list of companies that will provide that service. There are basketball, beach volleyball and tennis courts for the whole family to enjoy. After all that you're probably hungry! There are many dining options on this large property.

If you are on a tight budget you'll be glad to know the food court provides a large selection of inexpensive options for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

High Velocity is a fun sports bar where you can catch the game and a tasty bite to eat.

The Pavilion Pool Bar and Grill is the place where you'll want to grab a snack or a cocktail poolside.

Solaris is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. It offers a breakfast buffet in the morning and homestyle meals throughout the day. For an after-dinner drink, try the lobby bar and veranda terrace overlooking the pool.

The Mikado Japanese Steakhouse is an entertaining dining experience with food cooked right in front of you by the skilled chefs.

The Restorante Tuscany has a rustic, yet glamorous feel

inside, and the outside feels like a bistro. The food is what I would call Italian fusion: Classic with a twist. The menu may look a little pricey, but once you receive your entree, you'll see they use very fine ingredients for a homemade taste.

The Hawks Landing Steakhouse has been voted the best steakhouse in Orlando. It overlooks the beautiful golf course and offers USDA prime beef as well as fresh seafood.

The Hawks Landing Golf Club features an 18-hole course with a large pro shop. You can even get lessons from the Bill Madonna Golf Academy. Having the golf course right on property is popular with the convention crowd.

The new 105,000-square-foot Cypress Ballroom is the largest pillar-free resort ballroom in the country. It can be connected to the Palms Ballroom to add up to 150,000 square feet of space. With the smaller ballrooms and meeting areas, their convention center has more than 450,000 square feet of tech-friendly event space. It takes up almost an entire level. Also, tents can be set up for outdoor social events with special grass that high heels won't get stuck in. It's the

**Location:** 8701 World Center Drive, Orlando

**Prices:** Standard room rates are \$169 to \$429 per night with an additional \$30 per night for a pool view upgrade. Suites are \$269 to \$6,000 per night.

**Phone:** 800-380-7931

**Online:** [MarriottWorldCenter.com](http://MarriottWorldCenter.com)



For a quick meal or snack, visit the food court downstairs.



Many of the rooms offer wonderful views of the pool, lakes, golf course and beyond.

perfect spot for an outdoor wedding.

The Orlando World Center Marriott is centrally located to all of Orlando's main attractions. In fact, it's become an icon view from I-4. Transportation to

most of the theme parks is available for a nominal fee, but there's a free shuttle to the Premium Outlet Mall. If you would prefer to rent a car, Hertz has a desk at the resort.





# Authentic Italian Using Fresh Local Foods

**Portobello is a “Hidden” Gem at Downtown Disney**



Portobello's fresh style and approach is evident in their bright interior styling, far left, and their inviting outdoor patio dining area, left,



PHOTOS BY SIMON VENESS.

The subtle and unassuming styling of Portobello's Tuscan-inspired design makes it easy to overlook in the bustle of Downtown Disney.





If there is one restaurant that tends to get overlooked in the great tourist kafuffle of Downtown Disney, it's the little corner of Italy next to the more imposing Fulton's Crab House at the Pleasure Island side of the Marketplace. But those who have dined here in the past

will know that Portobello, owned by the Levy Group, is one of the most consistently pleasing - and excellent values - of all Walt Disney World dining choices.

That's pretty high acclaim, but consider these few salient facts for starters: you can lunch on pizza or a sandwich for \$9 to \$13, a large antipasti serves four, and if you just want to "graze," there is a Meatball Bar where you can chow down on some excellent meatball sliders.

In 2011 the menu was refreshed to restore a few old favorites, notably the luscious Portobello Mushroom appetizer, and some new choices were added, including the superb Misti and Grande Misti antipasti platters, Bucatini, and Braised Duck Leg. You can practically taste Tuscany in every bite.

But the real magic here is fresh thinking from the kitchen, courtesy of Executive Chef Steven Richard, that includes tantalizing pickled vegetables and a wildly unique dessert - Biramisu. Yes, that's Beer and Tiramisu combined. Chef Richard teamed up with Award-winning Chef Tony Mantuano of Chicago's Spiaggia to complete the menu transformation, and their joint efforts are a winning combination.

What makes the Portobello dining experience so special? Chef Richard explains: "It's hard to find genuine Italian food in Florida, and in the tourist area in particular. We're more authentic, and we use homemade items you can't find anywhere else. It's



While the dining rooms are wonderfully relaxing and easy on the eye, the bar area offers an equally stylish vibe for a pre-dinner drink or even the chance to graze on a selection from their unique Meatball Bar menu.

simple food based on simple ingredients; we let the ingredients tell the rest of the story."

Fresh, local meats and produce are key. "You could open an Italian restaurant and think you have to import everything from Italy," Chef said, "but one of the tenets of Italian cooking is that you use what's in your backyard. We get fresh fish delivered every day, fresh produce six times a week, and we have a purveyor who goes to Plant City to get strawberries right from the local area. We take that to heart."

Attention to the traditional values of comfort and wholesomeness is the foundation of Portobello's philosophy. "If you're going to take a humble cut of meat you have to use techniques to turn humble

into something special," Chef Richard told us. "Anyone can put a steak on the grill, but to take a pork belly and render it into something special takes a lot more effort. We want you to feel like you're coming into our home."

With that in mind, we started our dining experience with the Misti antipasti platter, and our taste buds were immediately ambushed by an uber-crisp pickled green tomato with onion and two gorgeous crostini - one with oven-dried tomato (juicier and less palate-bushwhacking than the sun-dried version) and the other a ricotta and honey concoction with locally produced Winter Park honey. Sounds weird, right? But it is a truly dreamy taste and was quickly voted our surprise hit







The creative mind behind Portobello's magnificent and authentic Italian menu, Executive Chef Steven Richard.



Bright colors, earth tones and hints of true Tuscan origin are all a key part of the decor, which assures visitors of a rich dining experience.

of the day. There was also a crisp pickled beet, super-thin prosciutto and deliciously nutty Parmigiano Reggiano.

Next up was the Black Linguine with Shrimp, a surprisingly light concoction with fresh garlic, tomatoes and asparagus – beautifully crisp and succulent and a good choice with a light sauvignon blanc on a hot day. Then we tried the Gnocchi – traditional Italian potato dumplings in a thick pork ragu – and the Bucatini – long pasta tubes with guanciale, which all added up to a melt-in-the-mouth smoothness with none of the chewiness often associated with gnocchi. The Bucatini was the taste sensation of the meal, with pork heavily infused with garlic and chili pepper that positively explodes in a series of deeply satisfying and long-lasting rolls of deliciousness.

Chef Richard returned to check on our progress, and although we had eaten ourselves to a standstill, he would not allow us to leave without trying the Biramis. We were intrigued to see the presentation – in a beer glass from the local Orlando Brewing company, which provides the Porter ale base. How did this whimsical take on the old Italian stand-by come about?

“I have to credit Chef Mantuano with the idea; he’s the one who suggested we do a dessert with beer,” Chef Richard said. “Beer has hops, which are bitter, so we created a reduction of beer and sugar to balance the bitterness. Then we cut circles out of homemade lady fingers soaked in the reduction, add more

reduction to mascarpone, layer them in a logo beer glass, and top it with cream so it looks like a beer with a head on it. It was a fun project and I’m happy with the way it turned out. It’s interesting and imaginative.” We certainly agreed, as the taste was utterly unique, with none of the cloying sweetness typical tiramisu presents. The beer flavor provided a dry and earthy finish that was quite captivating and insured we had a great conversation piece to finish with too.

Although we tend to be grazers, enjoying a few tastes of several dishes, with so many gorgeous flavors in front of us, a meal such as this, especially in the heat of a Florida summer, would be a daunting prospect. Chef Richard has the solution: “The idea of having an appetizer, salad and an entrée is going away, and the trend is toward smaller plates,” he told us. “Come to Portobello with a group and have the antipasti. Share a couple of pastas, share a couple of entrees. A sharing format makes it much more interesting. Our portions are generous and satisfying, but it is not our goal that you eat it today, then take it home for lunch tomorrow and the next day. It’s never going to be fresher than when it comes directly from the kitchen. We want you to eat it when it’s fresh.”

There is a subtlety to Portobello that is deep and satisfying. The hints of Italian originality come through loud and clear, and the comforting cuisine of Tuscany will call you back again and again to this little gem in Downtown Disney.





Those delightful dishes: the superb Misti antipasti platter, top, the wonderfully flavorful Bucatini, middle, succulent black linguine with Florida rock shrimp, above, and their fun signature dessert, the Biramisu, right.

## Portobello

**Location:** Downtown Disney

### Price Range:

Appetizers: Lunch: \$5 to \$13; Dinner: \$8 to \$11  
 Antipasti: \$13 to 24  
 Entrees: Lunch: \$13 to \$16; Dinner: \$19 to \$29;  
 Pizza \$10 to \$13  
 Desserts: \$6 to \$8

**Contact:** 407-934-8888

**Online:** [disneyworld.com](http://disneyworld.com) and [portobellorestaurant.com](http://portobellorestaurant.com)

### Hours:

Lunch: 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Dinner: 4 to 11 p.m.

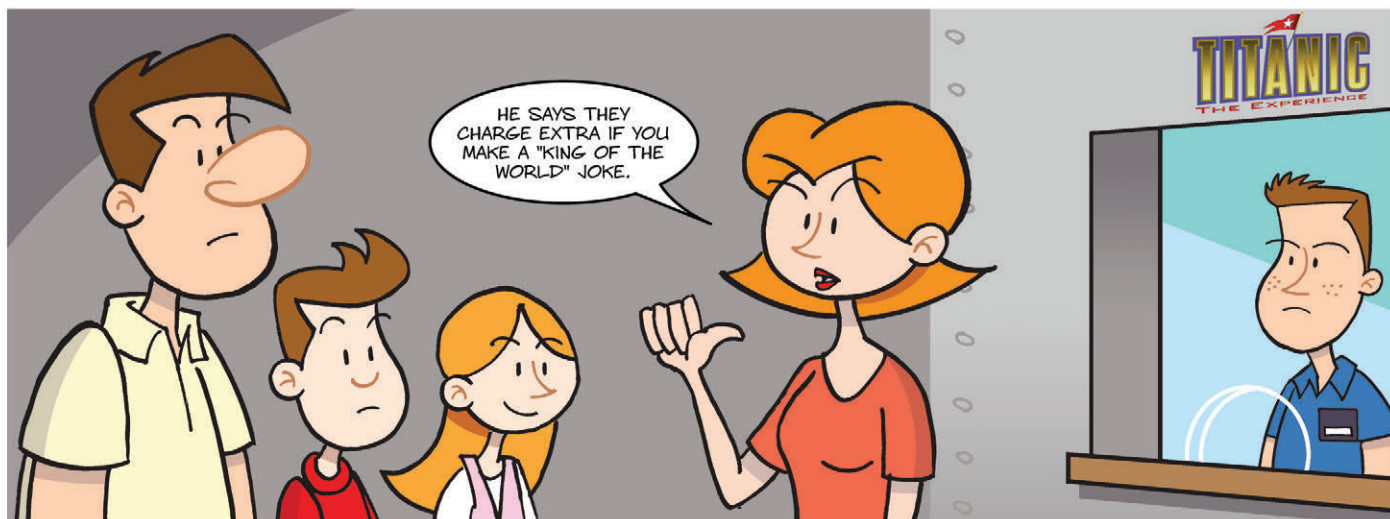
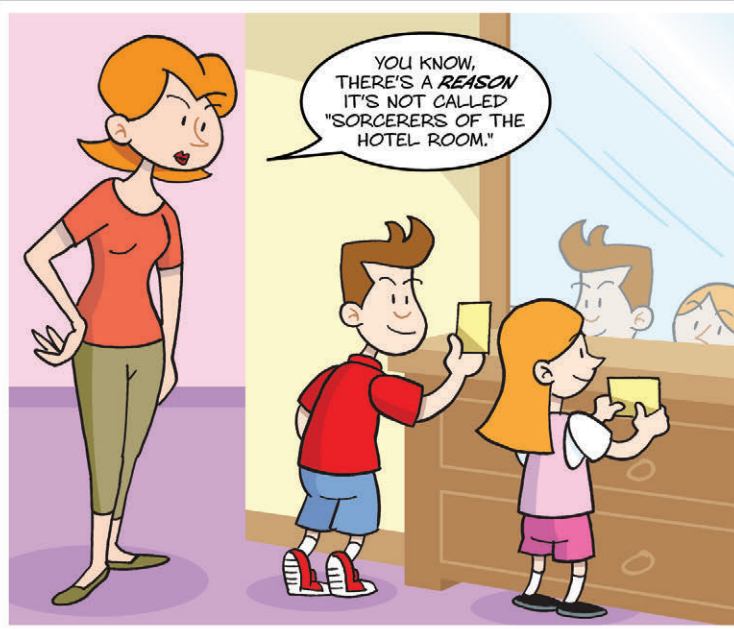
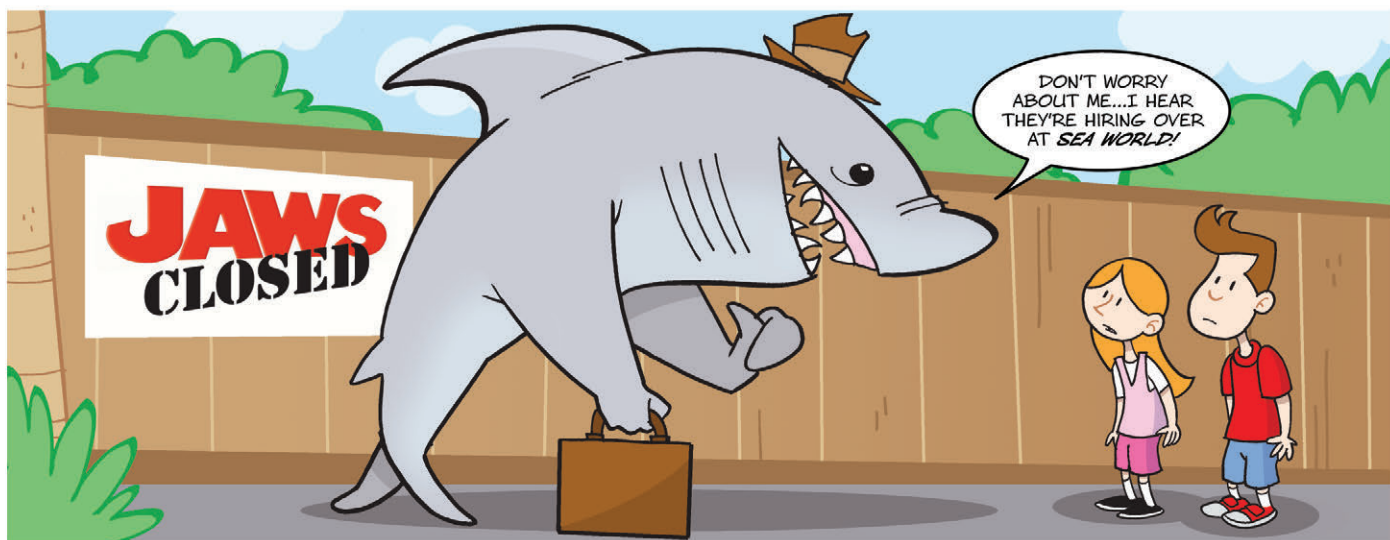
Portobello is on the Disney Dining Plan.





# BEAMUSEMENT PARK

by John Green  
& Pat Lewis





# SPOT the DIFFERENCE

Universal Studios guests smile and scream as they fall down one of the drops on the Hollywood Rip Ride Rockit roller coaster.

**Can you find the 10 differences in the photo on the right?**



1. The guest on the left, second seat up from the bottom, has a different facial expression. 2. The guest at the top right seat is no longer wearing a watch. 3. An extra red bar has been added to the walkway at the top of the photo. 4. The guest on the right side, second up from the bottom, is now wearing a black necklace. 5. The guest on the right side of the photo, second up from the bottom, is now wearing a plain white shirt. 6. The round object on the left-side seat, third down from the top, is missing from the top left corner of the photo. 7. The guest's red shirt (bottom seat right side) has changed to gold. 8. A step is missing from the top left corner of the photo. 9. The guest in the left seat, third up from the bottom is now wearing a watch. 10. The handrail on the right-side seat, third down from the top, has changed in length.



# Universal Orlando announces the 'Year To Be Here'

A brand new parade and nighttime fountain show are just two of the new things guests will find at Universal Orlando this year as they celebrate 100 years of Universal movies.

"We are about to offer our guests a historic range of incredible new entertainment experiences," said Alice Norsworthy, executive vice president of marketing and sales for Universal Orlando Resort.

## Universal's Superstar Parade

*Spring at Universal Studios*

An all-new daily parade that features larger-than-life floats, state-of-the-art technology and hundreds of energetic street performers. Guests will sing and dance along with characters like the minions from *Despicable Me*, E.B. from the hit comedy *Hop*, Nickelodeon's *Dora & Diego* and *SpongeBob SquarePants* during the interactive experience.

## Universal's Cinematic Spectacular: 100 Years of Movie Memories

*Spring at Universal Studios*

Narrated by Morgan Freeman, this new nighttime show will celebrate the most powerful and emotional

moments from Universal Pictures' most iconic films — all on cutting-edge waterfall screens within the Universal Studios lagoon and surrounded by colorful fountains and pyrotechnics.

## Despicable Me Minion Mayhem

*Summer at Universal Studios*

The 3D experience begins when guests enter Gru's home, where they learn that they're being recruited to become minions and undergo "minion training." Things don't go as planned, and guests find themselves on a wildly hysterical journey with Gru and his daughters.

## The Amazing Adventures of Spider-Man Upgrade

*March at Islands of Adventure*



The long-time favorite ride will feature all-new, 4K digital high-definition animation and upgrades to the set, audio and lighting systems.

## Blue Man Group

*Now at CityWalk*

Featuring a new show environment, new music, new technology and new experiences.

## Hollywood Drive-In Golf

*Now in CityWalk*

A unique 36-hole miniature golf experience inspired by the classic drive-in movie era.

## New SpongeBob Store

*2012 in Universal Studios*

A new immersive shopping experience will become home to *SpongeBob SquarePants* and other characters from the show.

## Family Splash Play Area

*Summer at Wet 'n Wild water park*

The new area will feature 15 water slides and more than 100 soakers, jets, waterfalls and water cannons.



## WIN A PRIZE!

Tell us the location of this photo and you could win a prize!

To enter, email your answer, along with your name and mailing address to [mystery@attractionsmagazine.com](mailto:mystery@attractionsmagazine.com).

**Hint:** It's no joke, you'll find this creature in a popular location.



## LAST ISSUE'S MYSTERY PHOTO ANSWER

Congratulations to Reese Shatto of Frisco, Texas, who correctly guessed last issue's Mystery Photo location. It's part of the entrance sign to Legoland Florida.

The deadline for entries is May 22, 2012. One answer allowed per person, per issue. Please include your name and mailing address with your answer. Everyone who submits the correct location will go into a drawing. One person, randomly selected from all the correct entries, will win a prize. We reserve the right to publish the name, city and state of those entering. One winner per household allowed per year.





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## Attractions News from Outside the Orlando Area



### Details of Cars Land

**Anaheim, Calif.** — As the opening date for Cars Land in Disney California Adventure approaches, a new detail about the marquee attraction has been revealed. Already known is that the ride system is similar to that of Epcot's Test Track. The top speed has been confirmed to be lower than that of Test Track at around 40 mph. The new land will occupy 12 acres with Radiator Springs Racers taking up half of that area. The area is expected to open this summer.



### Orlando Favorites to Open in California

**Anaheim, Calif.** — Two Downtown Disney favorites from Walt Disney World will be making their way out to the Disneyland Resort in California. The seemingly ever-packed Earl of Sandwich will open next to the movie theater that is across the street from the Disneyland Hotel. Ghirardelli ice cream and chocolate shop will fittingly be added to Disney California Adventure in the Pacific Wharf area of the park. Both the Earl of Sandwich and Ghirardelli will open this year.

### Harry Potter Tour to Open

#### London, England —

Here in America, much fanfare is given to Universal's Wizarding World of Harry Potter, and rightfully so. Now the birthplace of Harry Potter will get in on the act by opening its very own Harry Potter attraction this spring. About 20 miles from London resides Warner Bros. Studios Leavesden. It's at this studio that all eight Harry Potter movies were filmed. Now visitors will be able to take a self-guided, self-paced walking tour of the actual sets used



to shoot the movies. Tours are expected to take about three hours. Some of the sets guests will be able to explore include the Great Hall, Dumbledore's office, Gringotts, Hagrid's Hut and more. Authentic movie props will also be available for viewing. Admission is by ticket pre-purchase only and the first public tours will be March 31. An adult ticket is £28 (about \$44).



### Mad T Party to Replace ElectRONica

**Anaheim, Calif.** — Hoping to build upon the success of the nighttime entertainment of ElectRONica, Disney California Adventure announced Mad T Party as its replacement. ElectRONica included a dance party, Flynn's Arcade and street performers. Guests to the Mad T Party will "fall into the rabbit hole" in the party inspired by Tim Burton's version of Alice in Wonderland. What is being described as a family celebration will feature a live band, games and dancing. The Mad T Party will debut this summer.



### Wizarding World Coming to Universal Hollywood

**Hollywood, Calif.** — Universal Studios Hollywood announced that a West Coast Wizarding World of Harry Potter would open within the existing Universal Studios Hollywood park. James and Oliver Phelps, who played Fred and George Weasley in the Potter movies, were in Hollywood to make the official announcement. Craving a Butterbeer? Don't apparate just yet; the park won't open until sometime between 2014 and 2016. The California attraction is promised to be every bit as exciting as its Orlando kin and will include the Forbidden Journey ride and Hogwarts Castle.

### Transformers to Open at Universal Hollywood

**Hollywood, Calif.** — Transformers: The Ride has already opened at Universal Studios Singapore and is

slated to open at Universal Studios Hollywood in the coming months. The ride will feature 3D visuals in high definition along with advanced audio-animatronics featuring those famous Autobot and Decepticon Transformers.

### Holiday World Family Exploring Louisville

#### Louisville, Ky. —

Former amusement

park Kentucky Kingdom and later Six Flags Kentucky Kingdom closed in 2009. Several attempts have been made to negotiate its reopening with the Kentucky State Fair Board as the park sits on fair property. In early February, members of the Koch family established Bluegrass Boardwalk, Inc. to negotiate with the fair board. The Koch family owns and operates Holiday World and Surfin' Safari theme park and water park in Santa Claus, Ind about 85 miles away. The area was opened as Santa Claus land in 1946 by current park president, Dan Koch's grandfather. By the end of February, an agreement was reached for Bluegrass Boardwalk park to open in 2013 without public money with an initial \$15-20 million investment.



### Legoland California Announces Upgrades and Attractions

#### Carlsbad, Calif.

— Legoland

Resort, which includes Sea Life Aquarium near San Diego, just announced several attractions to open this year. Star Wars Miniland was just opened last year but already more Lego models are being added to the seven scenes that coincide with one scene from each movie and one from the animated series. The Star Wars Gallery will also open. Also to be added, Pirate Reef is a shoot-the-chute water ride that will allow for boat to boat water cannon battles culminating in a 25-foot plunge. Finally, Sea Life Aquarium will open a new exhibit dubbed Claws. As the name suggests, the exhibit will include all sorts of crustaceans including the spider crab that can measure 13 feet across. All attractions will debut separately this spring.



### Dollywood Enters Agreement to Develop Nashville Site

**Nashville, Tenn.** — Dolly Parton's Dollywood resides in Pigeon Forge at the foot of the Great Smokey Mountains. Across the state is Nashville, former home to the Opryland USA theme park that closed in 1997.





Now, Dollywood has entered into an agreement with Gaylord Entertainment to open a water and snow park on a 105 acre area adjacent to the Gaylord Opryland Resort. The park would operate as a water park in warmer weather and a snow park during winter months. What is being described as “phase one” of the development is planned to open by summer 2014. What else may be added remains unannounced and perhaps as yet unplanned.

### **Cedar Fair to Add More Windseekers and Dinosaurs** **Cedar Fair Parks** —

Last season, four Cedar Fair parks received the high-flying Windseeker ride. This year, two more parks will install the 300 foot spinning ride. Carowinds near Charlotte, N.C. and Kings Dominion in Doswell, Va. are in line for the new Windseekers. Dinosaurs Alive! debuted at a single park last year, Kings Island. For a \$5 up-charge, guests tour a 12-acre wooded area complete with interactive, life-sized audio-animatronic dinosaurs. This must have been a success because Canada’s Wonderland in Toronto, Cedar Point in Ohio, Dorney Park in Allentown, Penn., and Kings Dominion will all be getting Dinosaurs, albeit in smaller areas and with less dinos than Kings Island.



### **Kennywood to Open Black Widow**

**West Mifflin, Penn.** — Kennywood amusement park resides in the greater Pittsburgh area. This summer they will add Black Widow, a spinning, pendulum motion ride. The ride will stand 90 feet tall but reach a height of 146 feet with an angle of 120 degrees from center when its pendulum arm fully swings. Riders will sit in individual seats in a circle facing outward with feet dangling. As the riders are propelled 68 mph from side to side, the circle will spin. Motion sickness sufferers beware.

### **Disneyland Paris Celebrates 20 Years**

**Paris, France** — After initial controversy regarding labor unions among other issues prior to the park’s opening and then lackluster initial attendance, the resort originally named “Euro Disney Resort” has proven to be resilient. It was April 12, 1992 when the park opened its doors. In 1994, it changed its name



to Disneyland Paris. It showed its first quarterly profit in 1995. Walt Disney Studios Park, similar to Disney’s Hollywood Studios, opened in 2002. In addition to the two parks, the resort includes seven hotels and Disney Village, Paris’ Downtown Disney equivalent. To help celebrate 20 years, a new Disney Dreams show will include thousands of lights and special effects showcased at Sleeping Beauty Castle. Disney Magic on Parade is a brand new parade that will also debut as part of the celebration.

### **Schlitterbahn Announces New Indoor Water Park and Beach Resort** **South Padre Island, Texas** —

New Braunfels, Texas, just north of San Antonio, is home to the original Schlitterbahn waterpark. Opened in 1979, the company has since grown to include several parks around Texas, a full water resort village in Kansas City and a developing park in Ft. Lauderdale. Set to join this stable of water parks is a year-round indoor water park on South Padre Island in Texas. This beachfront, 221-room resort will feature shopping, dining, entertainment and the indoor water park along with special access to the already-present outdoor water park. The first phase of the development is set to open this summer.



### **Hong Kong Disneyland Celebrates Year of the Dragon**

**Hong Kong** — From mid-January through early February, the Hong Kong Disneyland Resort celebrated the beginning of the Year of the Dragon. What better way to celebrate a Chinese new year than with Mushu, the little ancestral dragon in the movie sent to assist Mulan in her adventure? Along with Mushu, classic Disney characters dressed in traditional Chinese

costumes were on hand to greet guests. Guests were treated to dragon processions down Main Street USA. They could also travel a Lucky Trail as Disney characters wished them luck along the way. Additionally, Chinese delicacies from snacks to full sit-down meals were available. The whole resort was decorated for the occasion.



### **Legoland Billund to Add Polar Land** **Billund, Denmark** —

The original Legoland in Denmark is about to open its largest and most expensive expansion ever. Polar Land will include a live penguin display and roller coaster. The unique part is that the coaster routes through the display that will, of course, include Lego models. The area will cover just over three acres and carry a \$13 million price tag. The roller coaster will travel at speeds up to 40 mph, but will slow down during key parts of the ride to allow for closer observation of the Gentoo penguins. There will be a theater for viewing of feedings and presentations. Guests will even have the opportunity to dine with (well, at least near) the penguins in a 350-seat restaurant. The land is expected to open in May about a month after the park opens for the season.



### **Six Flags Hurricane Harbor to Open King Cobra**

**Los Angeles, Calif.** — Six Flags Great America’s water park, Hurricane Harbor, was to get a Dive Bomber drop capsule ride this summer. It was announced that in lieu of this, they will open King Cobra. This racing slide has riders on tubes speeding through circular twists and turns at 32 mph until they suddenly drop down a 50 degree, 25-foot plunge right into the mouth of a massive cobra. This installation marks the first major U.S. installation for 35-year aquatic industry veteran Polin Waterparks and Pool Systems, the ride’s manufacturer.





## *Universal's Islands of Adventure*

One of these is not like the other. In the Trading Company store at the front of the park, you'll always find the Spider-Man display on the left, but many guests are startled when the Spider-Man on the right moves and talks to them. When not fighting crime or posing for photos on Marvel Super Hero Island, you may spot the webbed super hero where you least expect him.



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